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PHOTO ILLUSTRATION: ALEX MELLON

Ministers launch court bid to defy Covid inquiry

Aubrey Allegretti
Peter Walker

Ministers launched an unprecedented high court attempt yesterday to avoid handing over Boris Johnson's unredacted WhatsApp messages and diaries to the government-commissioned public inquiry into the handling of Covid.

In a move immediately condemned by bereaved families and opposition MPs, the Cabinet Office told the inquiry, headed by the retired judge Heather Hallett, that there were "important issues of principle" over passing information that might not be relevant.

Johnson said on Wednesday that he had given unredacted material to the Cabinet Office and urged them to share it with the inquiry.

But the department is concerned that this would set a precedent that could lead to Lady Hallett demanding the WhatsApp messages of serving ministers - not least Rishi Sunak.

Another layer of chaos was added last night when Johnson wrote personally to Hallett to say he could pass on his unredacted messages and emails directly, if it helped the inquiry. This would take place "without any prejudice to the judicial review", the letter said, with Johnson adding that he understood the need for some parts of decision-making to be private. His offer was just to make "a practical point" that the inquiry should be able to see the material, he said.

A spokesperson for the inquiry said Hallett was formally served notice of the Cabinet Office's plan to seek judicial review of her demand for the material at 4pm yesterday, the deadline she had set for the evidence to be provided. The Cabinet Office's letter to the inquiry said the legal process was being launched "with regret and with an assurance that we will continue to cooperate fully with the inquiry before, during and after the jurisdictional issue in question is determined by the courts".

Hallett first demanded WhatsApp messages and notebooks from Johnson and texts from one of his No 10 aides, Henry 6 →

'At the heart of what I do is punk' Lucinda Williams

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News



Szymon Marciniak refereeing a Manchester City match. The official allegedly spoke at an event hosted by a far-right politician
PHOTOGRAPH: PAUL ELLIS/AFP/GETTY

Champions League final referee linked to far-right leader's event

Rajeev Syal
Home affairs editor

Uefa is investigating claims that the referee due to officiate at next week's Champions League final was a keynote speaker at an event organised by a far-right politician.

Szymon Marciniak, who also refereed the World Cup final, spoke at an event in Poland on Monday organised by Sławomir Mentzen.

Mentzen, the leader of the Confederation party, is known for launching the political slogan "We stand against Jews, gays, abortion, taxation and the European Union". In 2021 he made international headlines as the producer of a beer named "White IPA Matters", which mocked the Black Lives Matter movement.

Marciniak, 42, is due to referee the match between Manchester City and Internazionale on 10 June at Istanbul's Atatürk Olympic Stadium.

On 29 May he attended a gathering, under the title "Everest", which was billed as a networking event complete with a beer-drinking session. Anti-racist activists said it was in reality an attempt to gain political support.

Approached by the Guardian about Marciniak's involvement, a Uefa statement said: "Uefa is aware of the allegations surrounding Szymon Marciniak and is seeking urgent clarification. Uefa and the whole football community abhor the 'values' that are promoted by the group in question and takes these allegations very seriously. A further announcement will be made tomorrow, after reviewing all the evidence."

His attendance at the event was first disclosed by the anti-racist organisation Never Again. Rafał Pankowski, the organisation's co-founder, said: "We are shocked and appalled by Marciniak's public association with Mentzen and his brand of toxic far-right politics.

> *'Uefa is aware of the allegations over Szymon Marciniak'*
> **Uefa statement**

"It is incompatible with the basic values of fair play such as equality and respect. We call upon the referee to acknowledge his mistake. If he does not do it, we believe Uefa and Fifa should draw consequences."

Everest's poster, distributed through social media, featured Mentzen drinking beer from a cup. Another poster featured Marciniak wearing a Fifa referee kit. A post by Mentzen announcing Marciniak's presence at the event was shared on Marciniak's Facebook fanpage. Marciniak was presented as a speaker on the event's website alongside Mentzen, who subsequently praised Marciniak as a "genius speaker".

He is considered one of the most highly rated referees of his generation. He refereed the 2022 FIFA World Cup final between Argentina and France in December in Qatar and the 2018 Uefa Super Cup between Real Madrid and Atlético Madrid. In 2023, he was named "the world's best referee" by the International Federation of Football History & Statistics.

The Uefa inquiry into his involvement is expected to be undertaken by its chief of football, Zvonimir Boban and its chief refereeing officer, Roberto Rosetti. The organisation, mindful of a slew of recent claims of racism in football, is planning to make another announcement today.

The Everest meeting in Katowice was advertised as a networking event for influential people to share experience, with the most famous personality accepting the invitation being Marciniak, reports claimed. Mentzen, who also buys and markets beer, told one journalist the event would be different. "The atmosphere will be closer to a rock concert, a boxing gala, [rather] than a lecture hall," he was quoted saying.

Pankowski said Never Again was not calling for Marciniak's removal from the Champions League final, but hoped he would distance himself from the far right.

US seeks deal to reduce leaks of methane by Turkmenistan

Damian Carrington
Environment editor

The US is in negotiations with Turkmenistan over an agreement to plug the central Asian nation's colossal methane leaks.

Turkmenistan was responsible for 184 "super-emitter" events in which the powerful greenhouse gas was released in 2022, the highest number in the world. One incident caused climate pollution equivalent to the rate of emissions from 67m cars.

US officials hope some leaks from Turkmenistan's oil and gas industry could be halted by the start of the UN's Cop28 climate summit in late November.

Methane emissions cause 25% of global heating today. A surge in the emissions since 2007 could be the biggest threat to keeping below 1.5C of global heating and seriously risks triggering catastrophic climate tipping points, scientists say. Tackling leaks from fossil fuel sites is the fastest, simplest and cheapest way to slash methane emissions.

The US special envoy for climate, John Kerry, spoke to the president of Turkmenistan, Serdar Berdimuhamedov, on Monday. In April, the US secretary of state, Antony Blinken, met the foreign minister, Rashid Meredov in Washington DC, "underscoring the critical importance of reducing methane emissions".

A US statement said: "The US and Turkmenistan … will endeavour to feature methane mitigation outcomes by Cop28." An agreement could see the US providing financial expertise, said Bloomberg news.

After the Kerry-Berdimuhamedov call, Turkmenistan's foreign ministry said "systematic work" was being carried out in the country "focused on the consistent introduction of advanced environmentally friendly resource-saving technologies in the oil and gas, energy, transport and other industries".

Satellite data shows little change in Turkmenistan's methane emissions from 2019 to 2022. New satellite data is increasingly putting the spotlight on countries with big methane leaks. They include the US, where new regulations will impose large fines for leaks, and Russia.

In May the Guardian revealed that methane leaks from Turkmenistan's two main fossil fuel fields alone caused more global heating in 2022 than the UK's entire carbon emissions. Emissions of the gas were "mind boggling" and an "infuriating" problem that should be easy to fix, experts said.

The Guardian had revealed in March that Turkmenistan was worst in the world for methane "super emitting" leaks, based on satellite data analysis by the French firm Kayrros.

The leaks are believed to come from poorly maintained oil and gas pipelines and from the venting to the atmosphere of unwanted methane gas produced alongside oil. Gathering information in the authoritarian state, however, has been difficult.

> **184**
> *Number of 'super-emitter events' in 2022 involving methane for which Turkmenistan was to blame*

A recent study found major leaks from just 29 pieces of equipment in one of Turkmenistan's main fossil fuel fields. It also suggested a switch from flaring methane, a way to burn unwanted gas, to venting was behind some of the vast outpourings. Burning the gas produces carbon dioxide, but causes about 80 times less global heating over 20 years. Relighting flares is straightforward and fixing leaks increases the gas captured.

"Pumping gas out of the ground and immediately releasing it into the air is about as clever as driving a car over a cliff," said Euan Nisbet, a professor at Royal Holloway, University of London, and member of the scientific oversight committee of the UN International Methane Emissions Observatory (Imeo).

Manfredi Caltagirone, head of Imeo, said: "Reducing methane emissions is key to reaching the objective of the Paris agreement. Turkmenistan is an important country of focus for global actions on methane emissions but so are other major emitting countries such as Russia, US, Iran, Iraq, China, Libya, Algeria, Venezuela and Canada."

▼ Adam Diver, whose swim of more than two days across the Irish Sea required a zigzag path with the tides
PHOTOGRAPH: DAVE KNEALE/GUARDIAN



▲ Diver in the sea with kayakers; below, on the boat

Former soldier becomes first to make 46-mile swim to the Isle of Man



Mark Brown
North of England correspondent

A former army captain has become the first person on record to swim between the UK mainland and the Isle of Man, in a gruelling 46-mile challenge navigating tricky tides and the near constant attention of jellyfish.

It was something of a "suffer fest", said Adam Diver, as he emerged shattered but smiling from the Irish Sea on Wednesday afternoon.

The next morning he was still feeling the effects. "I am exhausted," he said. "But it was a great team effort. I'm going to take a couple of days to get my body back in shape. I am very weak and tired as you can expect."

The idea of swimming to the Isle of Man came from his 14-year-old son, Dexter, he said. Dexter is a keen competitive swimmer and when pools were shut during lockdown, the pair swam in the sea near their home town of Fleetwood, Lancashire. Diver's parents live on the Isle of Man and one day Dexter asked if it was possible to swim there.

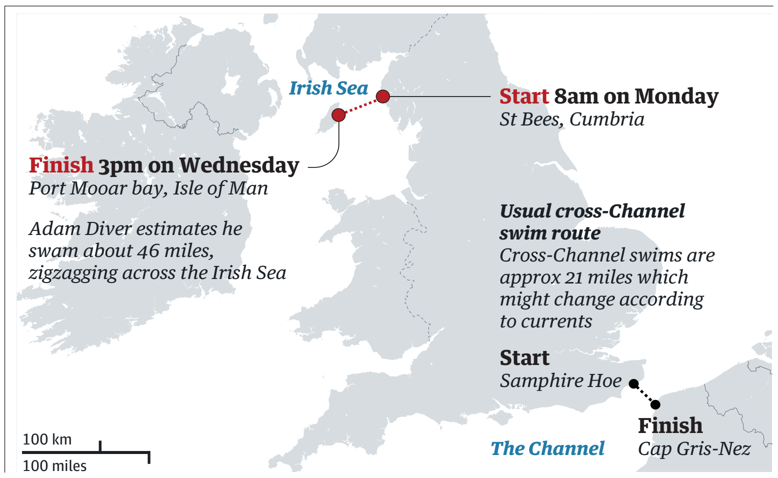
It planted the seed for an endeavour that is far from straightforward



and far more challenging than the cross-channel swim. About 300 people a year attempt the 21-mile swim between the Kent coast and Cap Gris-Nez, between Calais and Boulogne. About one in five are successful.

Until now no one had been successful in swimming from Great Britain to the Isle of Man.

"It is very technical," said Diver, 46. "You've got to work with the tides and if you don't have people onboard who know the Irish Sea then it is



pretty difficult to do. You need a boat, you need a crew and kayaking team, so it's difficult to get it all together."

Diver previously worked at Fleetwood nautical college so was able to ask colleagues if it could be done and look at navigation charts. In a straight line the distance is 32 miles, but Diver had to zigzag, altering direction every six hours to move with the tides. He estimates that he swam 46 miles.

Diver and his team tried it last year but were thwarted by a storm. This year they had been on standby waiting for three days of high pressure and no wind. That came this week and he set off from St Bees, in Cumbria, at 8am on Monday, arriving at Port Mooar bay at 3pm on Wednesday.

"I got stung in the face by a lion's mane jellyfish and then I got stung on the legs and arms about every 10 minutes. I was swimming over them all the time." The sting was like having instant sunburn, he said. There were lovely moments though, including the crackling noise that Diver rightly guessed was from dolphins. "I shouted up to the boat crew that I could hear something in the water, dolphins talking to each other. Ten minutes later they saw them about 100 metres away."

One reason for the swim was to increase awareness of mental health issues. Diver works as a cognitive behavioural therapist. "I think it's very important to raise awareness for common mental health problems like anxiety and depression. I think people need to talk about it."

The second reason was to raise money for the Burnley-based charity Healthier Heroes, which helps veterans rebuild their lives. So far more than £12,000 has been raised; further donations can go to the Big Swim's Gofundme page.

Diver, who will compete at the world triathlon championships in Spain in September, spent 27 years in the army serving in Northern Ireland, Iraq, Afghanistan and Bosnia.

The swim was a tough challenge, impossible without his support team and family, he said. His current priorities were a shower, a hot meal "and just doing nothing".

Trump win reframed TV version of The Handmaid's Tale – Atwood

Harriet Sherwood
Arts and culture correspondent

Margaret Atwood was "the only person who benefited from the election of Donald Trump", she was told by her agent soon after the 2016 election.

The television drama version of The Handmaid's Tale had begun filming in the run-up to Trump's divisive win. "We woke up the morning after [the election] and there was Donald Trump, and we all said to ourselves: 'We are now [working on] a different show,'" Atwood told an audience at the Hay literary festival.

"Nothing about it had changed, but the frame around it had changed. It was going to be viewed differently than if Hillary Clinton had won."

The TV adaptation of Atwood's dystopian novel about a totalitarian and religiously fundamentalist regime in which enslaved women are forced to bear children was hugely successful when it aired in April 2017, three months after Trump took office. The sixth and final season is expected to be in production later this year.

It propelled Atwood, already an acclaimed author, to new fame, and her novel, first published in 1985, topped the bestsellers' lists in the following months. She told the Hay audience she had begun writing the story in the aftermath of the election of Ronald Reagan as US president in 1980, which saw "the activation of the religious right as a political force".

In 2019 she published a sequel to the Handmaid's Tale, The Testaments, which centred on the character of Aunt Lydia, who turns against the Gilead regime. The novel jointly won the 2019 Booker prize. "As a longtime student of totalitarianism and how [such regimes] fall apart, there are always subversives from the inside, often quite highly placed ones, who have fallen out of



▲ Atwood was 'the only person to benefit from Trump's election'

love with the prevailing ideology because they have seen the results of it. [Aunt Lydia] becomes one of those people," Atwood said.

Atwood, 83, has recently published a volume of autobiographical short stories, to add to her tally of 17 novels and 18 volumes of poetry.

As a writer, "you have an accumulation that can either go in a drawer or into the wastebasket or into a book", she said. "The ones you put in a drawer are ones you think you might be able to use later on."

She started writing for magazines under initials "because I didn't want anyone to know I was a girl. It was 1960, everything was very male throughout the 50s and 60s."

Ministers launch legal challenge to Covid inquiry's messages request

Continued from page 1

Cook, last month. The Cabinet Office's letter said it had provided "as much information as possible", including messages from Johnson and Cook redacted for national security reasons and to remove "unambiguously irrelevant material".

The letter said that while Johnson had provided the Cabinet Office with some messages, they dated only from May 2021, when he acquired a new phone, and also the month he ordered the inquiry. Officials had asked the former prime minister to provide earlier WhatsApp communications, it added.

Johnson's contemporaneous diaries and notebooks would also be provided, with similar editing, the letter said, a process likely to be completed in the next two days.

Hallett has insisted that she should decide what material is relevant to the inquiry that she leads.

The Guardian was told that Sunak and Oliver Dowden, the deputy prime minister, signed off the decision to launch a judicial review on Wednesday.

An ally of Johnson's said the reason why the former prime minister had not handed over pre-May 2021 messages was that he changed phones after it emerged his number had been listed online, and that he was given security advice to not turn on the old device again. Johnson was thus unable to see the earlier messages, but he was happy to pass the phone to the inquiry if needed, the ally said.

He had asked the Cabinet Office about possible security and technical support with this. The Cabinet Office was aware of this, the ally added.

The prospect of a legal battle with a public inquiry is highly unusual and risks claims of a cover-up. When ministers set up the inquiry, they promised it would allow relatives and others to learn the truth about the decision-making process during the pandemic. The Covid-19 Bereaved Families for Justice group called the prospect of the Cabinet Office suing its own inquiry "absolutely obscene".

Rivka Gottlieb, a spokesperson for the organisation said: "Why are the Cabinet Office standing in their way? You have to assume that they're sitting on evidence that will devastate Rishi Sunak's reputation and that's more important to them than saving lives in the future."

> *'Sunak must comply with the inquiry's requests for evidence in full. No excuses'*
>
> **Angela Rayner**
> *Deputy leader, Labour*

Angela Rayner, Labour's deputy leader, said the public "deserve answers, not another cover-up" and added: "Instead of digging himself further into a hole by pursuing doomed legal battles to conceal the truth, Rishi Sunak must comply with the Covid inquiry's requests for evidence in full.

"There can be no more excuses."

Daisy Cooper, the Liberal Democrats' deputy leader, said: "This cowardly attempt to obstruct a vital public inquiry is a kick in the teeth for bereaved families who've already waited far too long for answers."

While an interim decision on the issue could be made within days, which could potentially suspend Hallett's demands while the case is heard, a full hearing could take weeks to be completed.

The lengthy Cabinet Office letter said the issue to be determined by the high court was "whether the inquiry has the power to compel production of documents and messages which are unambiguously irrelevant to the inquiry's work".

It went on: "We consider there to be important issues of principle at stake here … Individuals, junior officials, current and former ministers and departments should not be required to provide material that is irrelevant to the inquiry's work. It represents an unwarranted intrusion into other aspects of the work of government. It also represents an intrusion into their legitimate expectations of privacy and protection of their personal information."

The letter was accompanied by a formal legal document setting out the claim, citing the Cabinet Office as the claimant, the inquiry as the defendant, and Johnson and Cook as "interested parties".

The decision to take on the inquiry has already caused some disagreement within government, with Grant Shapps, the energy secretary, saying officials should be given "whatever they want" and that there was nothing for ministers "to be shy or embarrassed about".

Jonathan Jones, a former head of the government legal department, told the Guardian this week that a judicial review seemed likely, but that he thought the government would ultimately lose.

"My instinct is that it will be quite hard for the government or the Cabinet Office to challenge the section 21 notice on relevance grounds," he said.



Standoff How did it start and where could it end after missed deadline?

Aubrey Allegretti
Kiran Stacey

The already knotty row over Boris Johnson's unredacted WhatsApp messages has been further complicated by ministers launching legal action against the official Covid inquiry.

How did the row begin?

The Cabinet Office refused to pass on the unredacted WhatsApps and notebooks for two reasons.

Primarily, senior Whitehall bosses believe they should get to decide what information is and is not relevant to the Covid inquiry.

Second, there are said to be many personal and innocuous messages mishmashed in the jumble of potentially tens of thousands of texts. The Cabinet Office argues that ministers' privacy is important and forums where they can discuss the pros and cons of policy in secret should be protected.

There is a third reason, which is not openly admitted to but talked of among high level government insiders: they fear that handing over Johnson's unredacted messages sets a precedent, and that further requests would then follow for other ministers, including the prime minister, Rishi Sunak.

How did the government try to avoid complying?

The Cabinet Office tried to sidestep its requirement to hand over the files by claiming it did not actually have them.

That riled Heather Hallett, the inquiry head, since the Cabinet Office had pushed back so hard against handing over the files by claiming the redacted parts were "unambiguously irrelevant".

It emerged that government lawyers had vetted the files, but handed them back after officials had decided which bits they thought should not be given to Lady Hallett's team.

Johnson's team also claimed that the Cabinet Office had still had access to the documents for months, and been able to view them on multiple occasions in his office.

Hallett demanded that senior officials explain in detail who had had access to the documents and when, to be attested by a signed statement of truth. She set a deadline of 4pm on 1 June.

To break the impasse, Johnson sent his WhatsApp messages to a handful of officials at the Cabinet Office, and arranged for his notebooks to be collected.

The messages, however, only date back to May 2021. Anything before that date is stored on a separate phone, which the Cabinet Office said he had not handed over.

What will happen next?

An application will need to be made to the high court, which can be done quickly - potentially in a day.

The Cabinet Office could seek urgent interim "relief", which would in effect suspend Hallett's

▼ *Volodymyr Zelenskiy (left) with prime ministers Mette Frederiksen of Denmark, Rishi Sunak, Mark Rutte of the Netherlands and Alexander De Croo of Belgium at the European Political Community summit* PHOTOGRAPH: UKRAINIAN PRESIDENTIAL PRESS SERVICE/REUTERS





▲ *Boris Johnson said he had given the Cabinet Office unredacted WhatsApps and urged it to share the files with the inquiry* PHOTOGRAPH: JEREMY SELWYN

notice demanding the documents, while the full case is decided. Such an interim hearing could happen in days.

Hallett could decide instead to put the notice on ice, pending the decision of the court. The whole case, experts say, could be dealt with in weeks.

What are the Cabinet Office's chances of success?

Senior officials would only proceed with the case if their legal advice indicated they stood a chance of winning.

However, Johnson's decision to hand over the documents may suggest he thought such a battle was not winnable - and so it was better to take the quicker and less painful route.

Jonathan Jones, who used to run the government legal department, told the Guardian he thought the courts would ultimately favour Hallett, if the government stuck to arguing on relevance grounds.

Labour Women express fears over using party's complaints procedures

Aletha Adu
Political correspondent

Female Labour staff are fearful of using the party's official complaints process, prompting concern among senior officials as a long-serving MP has been suspended over allegations of sexual harassment.

Labour figures have acknowledged the "genuine concerns" of female colleagues, issuing a "cast-iron commitment" to take any action necessary that will restore faith in the party's processes.

In one email to all party staff, Labour's general secretary, David Evans, insisted Labour took sexual harassment and abuse claims seriously, saying "we take action in response to every complaint reported" and urged anyone with a complaint to come forward.

Evans said in another email seen by the Guardian: "I know that recent news stories have caused some of you to question our processes and the commitment we have to change the culture of our party and our politics more widely." He offered a "cast iron commitment" to take action, insisting it was "everyone's responsibility to report and challenge unacceptable behaviour, not just those who have experienced it directly".

Sexual harassment complaints made to Labour's internal system were referred to an independent investigator with the expertise and training in investigating sexual harassment and in equalities law, Evans said. The party had also launched a panel of "specially trained members" for sexual harassment.

But a senior Labour official stressed the party would not feel confident in its systems until the number of sexual harassment complaints "shoots up", indicating people felt confident in the process.

The general secretary said he had been working with a taskforce of the party's senior leadership over the last two weeks to review the formal processes for complaints to take place.

Geraint Davies, MP for Swansea West had the Labour whip suspended yesterday after allegations of sexual harassment surfaced from five women stretching back several years.

Davies has been accused of subjecting young women to unwanted sexual attention, both verbal and physical, and a formal complaint has been made against him, according to the news website Politico. The 63-year-old MP has said he does not recognise the allegations.

A senior Labour MP told the Guardian insiders had been aware of allegations about Davies's behaviour, but that it had been difficult to address them without a formal complaint. Labour has described the claims of "completely unacceptable behaviour" made against Davies as "incredibly serious".



▲ *Swansea West MP Geraint Davies has had the Labour whip suspended*

Two weeks ago, Labour staffers and MPs were concerned following reports the party had taken three years to investigate an allegation of sexual harassment made by a woman against a senior aide.

The man, 20 years the complainant's senior, was allowed to continue advising a Labour frontbencher, even though the complaint was upheld. He has since resigned from his role.

A separate report revealed a female MP was reluctant to use Labour's internal complaints system - despite being encouraged to do so - because she feared the popularity of the person she wished to report would mean the case would go nowhere. She reported the incident to the Metropolitan police, though Scotland Yard dropped the matter at her request.

Senior Labour figures held two meetings before parliamentary recess with staff to allay their fears, with more expected in the coming weeks, the Guardian understands. Insiders praised Evans' efforts during the talks, though another questioned why officials were encouraging staff to speak to their line managers who work within the party.

A Labour source said senior staff were worried about the perception the party had a problem with women and scrambling to make it look as if its processes were somehow miraculously improved even though no substantial reforms had been made to them in the last few years.

They told the Guardian many staff had expressed their fears over using the complaints system because the party had developed a perception of protecting powerful male harassers recently.

Climate Shadow team jostle for share of green funds

Kiran Stacey
Political correspondent

Senior Labour figures are urging Keir Starmer to give the go-ahead to a series of infrastructure projects as part of the party's £28bn-a-year green prosperity plan, even if they are not strictly environmental in nature.

Shadow cabinet ministers have asked the Labour leader and his shadow chancellor, Rachel Reeves, to expand the fund's green mission and use it to pay for a series of capital spending projects, such as housing or transport infrastructure.

The push threatens to cause tensions among Labour's top team, with the shadow energy secretary, Ed Miliband, having been one of the strongest advocates of climate action on the front bench.

One shadow cabinet minister said: "Voters care more about jobs than green stuff. It was always a mistake to call it the green prosperity plan. A bunch of us are now saying to Rachel it should be used for capital spending even if it's not explicitly green."

Another Labour source said: "Our industrial strategy and securonomics approach to the economy will mean that we will need to use available public capital more widely than just for net zero projects."

However, green activists have pushed back on the idea of dropping the plan's focus on environmentalism.

Chris Venables, deputy director of politics at the Green Alliance, said: "The primary issue at the general election will be the cost of living, but the solution to an economic crisis driven by a volatile fossil fuel market is to get ourselves off gas."

Reeves unveiled the plan to spend £28bn a year on climate measures two years ago, promising to be the UK's "first green chancellor", and it remains the party's biggest spending pledge. The party has already committed to using parts of the fund for a range of green schemes, including £60bn to pay for home insulation and £8bn to invest in green industries.



▲ *Labour's Rachel Reeves is pledging a £28bn-a-year green prosperity plan*

Labour sources say that Reeves has indicated to colleagues there will be no additional money to pay for major infrastructure spending, leaving shadow ministers battling to claim a share of the green fund for their own projects.

Labour is nervous about any suggestion of making uncosted spending pledges, with Paul Johnson, the head of the Institute for Fiscal Studies, warning that any new commitments are likely to require tax rises.

One shadow minister said: "We are all competing for that capital spending at the moment because Rachel Reeves won't let any other spending happen and won't allow any other tax rises."

A Labour spokesperson said: "The green prosperity plan, along with all of our policies, is subject to our fiscal rules being met and fiscal stability being maintained as we seek to tackle climate change - one of the biggest challenges of our time - in a way that cuts bills and creates good jobs and energy security in the process."

This is a call to bums

**Bums of the world, listen up.
The future of the planet is in our cheeks.**

Every day, more than 1 million trees are cut down to make traditional toilet paper – adding to the destruction of forests, ecosystems and habitats just to wipe our peachy posteriors.

We think it's total crap, but fart, erm, fear not. We can help make a change.

For too long we've been in the back. Hidden in baggy jeans, smushed in tiny seats. Well, this is our moment. The time to make our mark.

We can stop flushing forests down the toilet.

We can spread justice for Mama Earth.

Only we can sit down for nothing less than eco-friendly, 100% recycled toilet paper.

It's on us to uncrap the world.
So c'mon bums, it's go time.



'There's always hope'

United by passion, Manchester's reds and blues gear up for historic cup final



▼ Manchester United fans Michael O'Brien and his daughter Bianca, 15, at Old Trafford yesterday
PHOTOGRAPHS: JOEL GOODMAN/THE GUARDIAN

Helen Pidd
North of England editor

When Manchester United play Manchester City for the first time in an FA Cup final tomorrow, few at Wembley will have travelled as far as Leon Labko to witness the Manc-Manc showdown.

A native of Melbourne, Australia, it took the 78-year-old 25 hours to fly in for the match, undeterred by having suffered heart failure three times on previous flights, to watch his beloved United.

In a stage whisper he admitted he didn't even think his team would win. But he drew hope from the memory of other games thought to be a foregone conclusion. "I remember once watching us against Burnley. We had 41 attempts on goal and it ended in a nil-nil draw. So there's always hope," he said, sitting on a wall outside the Manchester United Supporters Trust in Old Trafford, where he has been soaking up the pre-match excitement this week.

Labko flies to the UK four or five times a season but recoils at the idea that it might be easier on his pacemaker to move to Manchester. "You've got to be kidding," he said. "You guys only get about two days of sunshine a year."

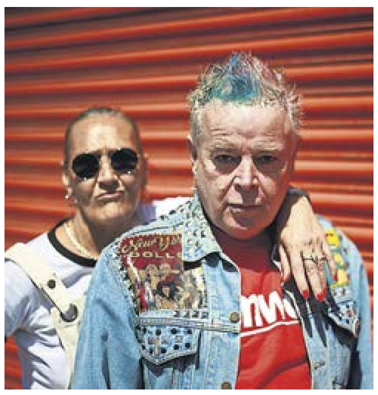
Also visiting the "Theatre of Dreams" yesterday was 15-year-old Bianca O'Brien and her dad, Michael. They had flown from Tipperary to Manchester for a Coldplay gig taking place in enemy territory - the Etihad stadium.



▲ Bobby Parekh and his father, Sal, will watch the final while working in their cafe opposite City's stadium
PHOTOGRAPH: JOEL GOODMAN/THE GUARDIAN

"If we are going to City's ground, we've got to wear something United," said Michael after buying training shirts at the Old Trafford megastore. The club has a special place in the family's heart: when Bianca was little she had leukaemia and United would send her free tickets to attend matches between treatment.

Drinking a breakfast can of Monster at the Bishop Blaize, a United pub round the corner, Mike Bennett was also looking forward to the match. With multicoloured hair and a suit covered in patches, he looked like someone you ought to recognise, which you would if you are into the Blockheads, as he is their current lead singer.



▲ Mike Bennett, right, lead singer of the Blockheads and a United fan



▲ Pauline Carroll runs the Townley, 'a City pub', near the Etihad stadium

> *'He'll build a wall round their goal - it's only way they'll win'*
>
> **City fan Warren**
> *On his friend and rival*

He was hoping to squeeze into the Bishop Blaize tomorrow and predicted 2-1 to United. The pub manager interjected: "Three nil to City." Hang on a minute, the manager of the nearest pub to Old Trafford is a blue? Apparently so.

Despite Manchester's residents being forced to pick a side from birth, and FA officials begging rival fans to take separate routes to Wembley, most of the time the reds and blues subsist in relative harmony. Over at the Townley pub in Beswick, a few minutes' walk from the Etihad, Pauline Carroll described herself as the landlady of a "City pub with United regulars".

Some of her regulars begged to differ, pointing out that United was founded in the 19th century in nearby Newton Heath, while City played at Maine Road in Moss Side until 2003. "This is a United area," insisted one. Drinking outside in the sunshine, a group of men ribbed each other about the game. Warren, a City fan, claimed that his friend Gilly, a red, was off to Wembley. "He's a bricklayer and he's going to build a wall around the United goal 'cos that's the only way they can win," said Warren.

At the Maine Road Cafe opposite the Etihad, father and son Sal and Bobby Parekh were excited about the FA Cup final. They planned to watch it while serving chips to Chris Martin fans, with Coldplay's residency lasting until Sunday.

For a while after City's move from Maine Road, the Parekhs would receive free tickets. Then in 2012 Sergio Agüero scored a last-minute goal to win City's first league title since 1968, and everything changed. "We can't get tickets now for love nor money," said Sal. He doesn't seem to mind: his first love is Preston North End. "I don't support City," he likes to say. "But City supports us."

Travel chaos expected as rail unions strike in ongoing dispute

Casper Hughes

Passengers have been warned to expect 48 hours of travel chaos starting this morning as two rail unions go out on strike on consecutive days.

Today's action will see 20,000 rail workers from the National Union of Rail, Maritime and Transport Workers (RMT) strike, followed by another day of action tomorrow by 12,000 train drivers who are members of Aslef.

Train operators have cautioned that rail services will be "severely reduced with variations across the network and no services at all in some areas".

About half of trains are due to run today, falling to 40% tomorrow when there will be no services on networks including Avanti West Coast, CrossCountry, Northern and Thameslink.

The RMT action is the latest in a dispute with operators that began last year and remains deadlocked over pay, terms and conditions. It follows another Aslef strike that disrupted the network on Wednesday.

Although all train operators in England will be hit, today's strike is likely to be less disruptive than the Aslef action or earlier RMT stoppages that involved the union's dispute with the track and signalling operator, Network Rail.

Most services across England and some cross-border services into Scotland and Wales will be affected. However, the latest strikes will cause particular headaches for supporters travelling to the FA Cup final between Manchester City and Manchester United in London tomorrow, and for Beyoncé fans with tickets to her Renaissance tour at the Tottenham Hotspur stadium.

The AA warned of heavy traffic, with fans switching from rail to road.

The RMT's general secretary, Mick Lynch, yesterday blamed the government for today's strike, accusing ministers of refusing to allow the Rail Delivery Group (RDG), which represents the train operators, to negotiate in good faith.

"Ministers cannot just wish this dispute away," he said. "They underestimate the strength of feeling among our members, who have just given us a new six-month strike mandate, continue to support the campaign and the action, and are determined to see this through until we get an acceptable resolution.

"The government now needs to unlock the RDG and allow them to make an offer that can be put to a referendum of our members."

Steve Montgomery, chair of the RDG, accused the RMT of "negotiating in bad faith, denying their members a say on a fair pay deal, needlessly disrupting the lives of millions of our passengers, and undermining the viability of an industry critical to Britain's economy".

Theatre review

A heartfelt adaptation of Loach's seminal film

I, Daniel Blake
Northern Stage, Newcastle upon Tyne
★★★☆☆

Mark Fisher

It is as if this adaptation of the Ken Loach film has been suspended between quotation marks. Topping and tailing Mark Calvert's heartfelt production is the claim by Damian Green, former secretary of state for work and pensions, that I, Daniel Blake was a "work of fiction". Safer for a politician to assume this story was made up than to admit its central truth: that our benefits system is punitive and demeaning - and is designed to be that way.

This staging, adapted by the film's star Dave Johns, refuses to let Britain's leaders off the hook. The story of a decent man laid off because of heart problems, only to find a support system purpose-built to make his life difficult, is interspersed with verbatim remarks by politicians. Whether it is David Cameron's vacuous "big society", Thérèse Coffey's suggestion the poor work "more hours" to pay for food or Lee Anderson's assertion that people "can't cook a meal from scratch", the show repeatedly flags up the gulf between political rhetoric and life as it is lived.

The production is at its best in the Kafkaesque scenes in which the universal credit claimant - sorry, "customer user" - is confounded by automaton-like staff with fixed scripts and bewildering protocols. David Nellist in the title role is principled, reasonable and uncowed. Faced by Janine Leigh's chillingly unyielding case worker, he makes a moving plea for compassion that falls on deaf ears.



'I, Daniel Blake is a show that repeatedly reminds us of the gulf between political rhetoric and life as it is lived'

▲ *David Nellist plays the lead role navigating the cruelty of the benefits system in I, Daniel Blake*
PHOTOGRAPH: PAMELA RAITH

At the heart of the play is the sweet relationship between Blake and fellow claimants Katie (Bryony Corrigan) and daughter Daisy (Jodie Wild). They are also good people taking the hit for problems not of their making, but too often they tell us of their troubles without fully dramatising them. Such moments are sad where the most galvanising scenes make us angry.

At Northern Stage, Newcastle upon Tyne, until 10 June and 12-16 September. Then touring until 18 November

Kiln theatre's artistic director to leave in 2024

Geneva Abdul

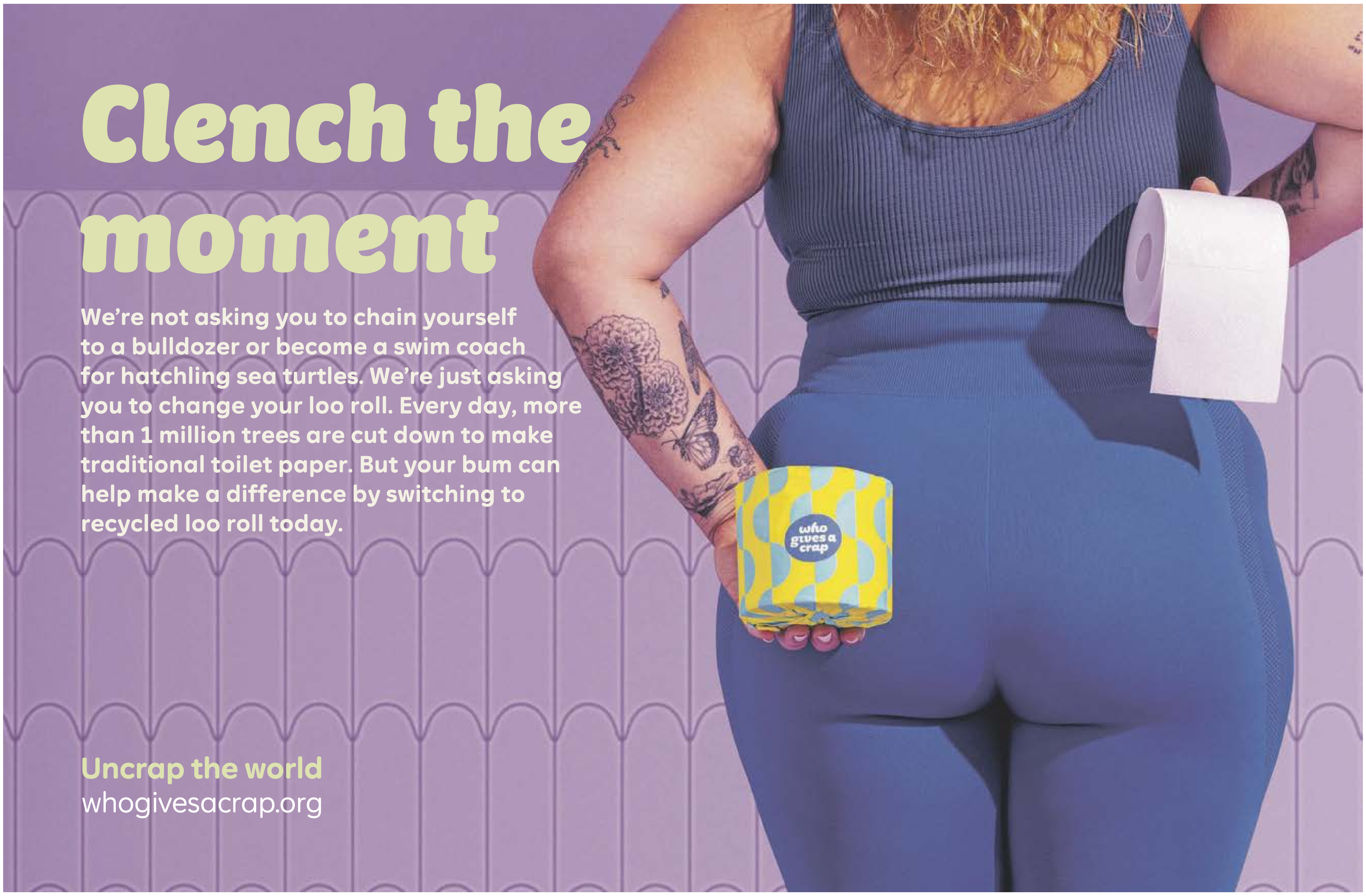
One of the UK's foremost artistic directors is standing down from the Kiln theatre after more than a decade of bringing politically and culturally diverse voices to the stage.

Indhu Rubasingham has been the artistic director of the Kiln theatre in north London since 2012 and became the first non-white woman to run a major London theatre.

"I never had an inkling of the journey ahead when I was appointed. I immediately felt the responsibility, but what emerged was both challenging and exhilarating, an experience I will carry with me for the rest of my life," said Rubasingham, who is leaving the post in early 2024.

Rubasingham rebranded the commercial theatre from the Tricycle theatre in 2018.

Born in Sheffield to Sri Lankan Tamil parents in 1970, Rubasingham first worked at the theatre in 1998, when she directed a production of Roy Williams's Starstruck.





◀ Emergency services, including the RNLI, rushed to the scene in Bournemouth on Wednesday after reports of swimmers in difficulty
PHOTOGRAPH: BNPS

Pleasure boat 'impounded' after deaths in sea off Bournemouth

Caroline Davies

A pleasure boat allegedly sailing near Bournemouth beach on Wednesday has reportedly been impounded by police after the deaths of two young people who got into difficulties in the sea.

The Dorset Belle, a cruise boat that operates from Bournemouth pier, was under guard in Poole harbour, the Times reported, quoting a police source as saying: "This vessel is under a police cordon. No one is permitted onboard or to touch the vessel."

Police investigating the circumstances that led to the deaths of a 12-year-old girl from Buckinghamshire and a 17-year-old boy from Southampton on Wednesday have said early investigations indicate there was no physical contact between any vessels and the swimmers. A man in his 40s who police said was "on the water at the time" has been arrested on suspicion of manslaughter. He was released last night under investigation.

On the day of the deaths, the Dorset Belle, which can accommodate 80 people, made numerous circuits of Bournemouth pier, according to the online tracker Marine Traffic, suggesting it was in the vicinity of the incident several times, the newspaper said.

RNLI lifeguards rushed into the sea off the crowded beach at Bournemouth at 4.30pm on Wednesday. Dorset police said they had received a report from paramedics at 4.32pm of people needing help. Emergency services attended and 10 people were recovered from the water.

The 12-year-old and 17-year-old had suffered "critical injuries" and later died in hospital. The eight others were treated at the scene by the ambulance service for injuries that were not life threatening.

An inquiry was launched by Dorset police, working with the Marine Accident Investigation Branch and Maritime and Coastguard Agency.

Rachel Farrell, assistant chief constable of Dorset police, said yesterday: "To avoid further speculation, I am able to tell you that it is clear that yesterday a number of people in the water got into difficulty and we are investigating the circumstances.

"Early investigation indicates that there was no physical contact between a vessel and any of the swimmers at the time of the incident. I can also confirm there is no suggestion of people jumping from the pier or jetskis being involved."

> *'I'd like to thank those who helped people in trouble in the water'*
>
> **Rachel Farrell**
> *Assistant chief constable*

As someone was in custody she could give only limited information. The two young people who died were not related, she said.

Early indications were that the incident involved "different people from different families who weren't known to each other and who were enjoying the water".

The emergency services "provided a really swift and coordinated response", she said. She asked people to refrain from circulating videos on social media. Urging anyone with any information to contact police, she said people could upload footage to the incident team, codenamed Operation Marble.

Local unconfirmed reports said an announcement had been made warning bathers of a dangerous riptide.

'Utterly broken' Schofield denies he groomed younger colleague

Donna Ferguson

Phillip Schofield has said he is "utterly broken" and feels "embarrassed and ashamed" about his affair with a younger male colleague, but denied grooming the man.

The former This Morning presenter, 61, resigned from ITV last week after admitting to an "unwise but not illegal relationship" with a man who is now in his mid 20s. In his first interview since leaving the broadcaster, Schofield told the Sun his daughters had been "guarding" him, adding: "If it hadn't been for my girls last week I wouldn't be here."



▲ *Phillip Schofield said his 'greatest apology' was to his former lover*

He reportedly met his former lover when the man was a 15-year-old boy at drama school, but said the affair did not begin until he was older and had begun working at ITV. Schofield was married at the time. He told the paper they became friends after the man started working on This Morning, adding: "I did not [groom him].

"There are accusations of all sorts of things. It never came across that way because we'd become mates."

Schofield said that he is "in a very bad way. Mentally, utterly, utterly broken."

Schofield also said that his "greatest apology" was to his former lover, for bringing the "greatest misery into his totally innocent life".

He added: "I am deeply sorry and I apologise to him because I should have known better … I will die sorry."

This week the presenter denied claims there was "toxicity" on the ITV show. MPs are reportedly planning to question ITV executives over the affair. The Prince's Trust has dropped Schofield as an ambassador and he has been drop by his talent agency.

The BBC is also set to release an interview with Schofield, conducted by Amol Rajan.

Two-child limit on benefits has left many households in poverty – study

Patrick Butler
Social policy editor

The UK's controversial two-child benefits limit, which restricts welfare payments to larger families in an attempt to force parents to find work, has failed to increase employment levels – but has left hundreds of thousands of households in poverty, according to the first study of its kind.

The government introduced the two-child limit in 2017, arguing that removing eligibility for benefits worth £3,000 a year per child for a family's third child and subsequent children would "incentivise" parents to move into work, or work more hours to make up the difference.

However, the study says the policy's impoverishment of larger low-income households has helped few parents get a job. Instead, its "main function" has been to push families further into poverty and damage their mental health.

"We found that, rather than increasing employment, the two-child limit increases poverty and hardship, and that this can actually make it harder for parents to take up work," said Kitty Stewart, a co-author of the study and an associate professor of social policy at the London School of Economics.

The policy – called the "worst social security policy ever" by one academic expert shortly after its introduction – is estimated to affect about 1.5 million children, with more than a million of them growing up in poverty. More than half the households affected are working families.

The study says the two-child policy fails to understand how and why parents in larger low-income families prioritise caring roles over work. It underplays many of the costs and complications of moving into work while bringing up young children, such as finding accessible and affordable childcare.

Impoverishing larger families because the parents actively choose to look after their youngest children "appears to be ineffective at best and discriminatory and harmful at worst", the study says.

The architect of the policy was the then chancellor George Osborne, who announced it in 2015 amid media hysteria surrounding "benefits broods".

A Department for Work and Pensions spokesperson said: "We want to help more parents to re-enter work, and encourage them to consider our childcare offers, which we are boosting to help low-income families. The two-child policy asks families on benefits to make the same financial decisions as families supporting themselves through work, and there continues to be careful exemptions and safeguards in place within the policy to protect people in the most vulnerable circumstances."



'We'll continue to fight'

A year on from killings in the Amazon, Indigenous activists defend their land with a new resolve

Tom Phillips *Rio de Janeiro*

Three assassins walked into a bar deep in the Brazilian Amazon one night last October. Beers flowed, tongues loosened and the men were overheard bragging about their latest job. "We're looking for this Orlando bloke. We've come to kill him," one of the inebriated hitmen is said to have declared, according to a tipoff conveyed to their target.

The Orlando in question was Orlando Possuelo, one of the Indigenous defenders who has been seeking to carry on the work of his colleague Bruno Pereira since Pereira was killed along with the British journalist Dom Phillips near the Javari valley Indigenous territory last June.

The planned killing did not take place. Who ordered it is unclear. But Possuelo, who has had two close associates murdered in four years, admitted the warning had shaken him. "Normally, I'm fairly relaxed about the threats … but there are days you wake up feeling a bit haunted," he said.

One year after the killings of Pereira and Phillips - which laid bare the environmental devastation inflicted under Brazil's former president, Jair Bolsonaro - Indigenous leaders and non-Indigenous allies such as Possuelo are intensifying their battle to protect the world's greatest rainforest and the Indigenous peoples who have lived there since long before European explorers arrived in the 16th century.

The activists are defiant in the face of the many dangers of confronting the environmental criminals and organised crime groups who have tightened their grip on the Amazon region.

"If they kill me, I'll go to heaven, because I'm defending my territory," said Daman Matis, 27, who helps to police a riverside government protection base on one of the waterways that illegal goldminers use to invade protected Indigenous lands.

Since taking power in January, Brazil's new president, Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, has strengthened efforts to protect Indigenous communities and the environment. It follows four years of chaos and destruction under Bolsonaro,

◀ *The Ituí and Itaquaí rivers curve through the Javari valley Indigenous land in Brazil's Amazon rainforest, where leaders promise a new era*
PHOTOGRAPH: RAFAEL VILELA/GETTY IMAGES

▼ *Indigenous activist Daman Matis, who helps police a protection base: 'If they kill me, I'll go to heaven because I'm protecting my territory'*
PHOTOGRAPH: JOÃO LAET/THE GUARDIAN







during which deforestation and land invasions soared.

Six Indigenous territories have been officially recognised, while federal police operatives, environmental special forces and army troops have been deployed to the Amazon to reassert control and send a message to the world about Brazil's commitment to eradicating illegal deforestation and fighting the climate emergency. "[We want] to inaugurate a new era in the region," said Humberto Freire, the head of Lula's newly created federal police department for the environment and the Amazon.

In Atalaia do Norte, the remote river town to which Pereira and Phillips were travelling when they were ambushed, a colossal floating police base has taken up position, with a name hammering home that desire. Nova Era (New Era), read the golden yellow letters stamped on to the base's black metal hull.

For all the good intentions, there is still fear, uncertainty and violence in the Javari territory, which is home to the world's largest concentration of isolated Indigenous groups. Indigenous communities and their champions remain under siege.

"I'd really love you to tell the story of how everything's fine now and everything has changed. This is the story I'd like you to be telling," Possuelo told the Guardian's reporters as they returned to the region for the first time since last year's killings, as part of a collaborative investigation coordinated by Forbidden Stories paying tribute to the victims and the causes they held dear. "But the reality is that nothing's changed."

Possuelo's bleak assessment does not mean the Javari's Indigenous activists are giving up the fight. Far from it.

Chapter Two

Protect and defend

Phillips, a longtime Guardian contributor, was killed while reporting on the embryonic work of an Indigenous patrol group that Pereira and Possuelo had helped create, called the Javari Valley Indigenous Monitoring Team, or EVU as it is known in Portuguese.

Its mission involved equipping Indigenous scouts with technology such as drones, GPS trackers and cameras. That equipment – coupled with their peerless knowledge of the rainforest – would help them detect crimes taking place within their territory, which is home to about 6,000 Indigenous people from the Kanamari, Kulina, Korubo, Marubo, Matis, Mayoruna and Tsohom-dyapa groups.

On a recent afternoon, dozens of Indigenous men, several still in their teens, arrived at EVU's base in Atalaia do Norte to sign up to defend their ancestral lands from a four-pronged assault: poachers and fishing gangs encroaching from the north, drug traffickers from the west, gold miners from the east and cattle ranchers from the south.



"What they did to Bruno and the journalist was so painful but we're going to continue fighting our enemies until they can no longer bear it," vowed the youngest of the group, 18-year-old Clenildo Kulina.

Kulina grew up in a village on the Curuçá River, five days from Atalaia by boat, and it was there that he first met Pereira. The Indigenous expert, then working for Brazil's Indigenous protection agency, Funai, was passing through at the start of one of his gruelling expeditions into the Javari's jungles and ventured into the rainforest with Kulina's uncle and cousin to search for isolated Indigenous tribes they hoped to protect. Kulina was too young to join them and Pereira's death robbed him of the chance to work with him once he came of age. "But now I have this opportunity and I'm going to take advantage of it," he said. "If I have to die, it will be for our people."

Another young volunteer, Marcelo Chawan Kulina, had also come hoping to secure a place on one of the patrol teams that Pereira regarded as crucial to the survival of the Javari's tribes. "I feel anxious and a little bit afraid," the 25-year-old admitted. "It's dangerous. When you confront the invaders, they shoot."

▲ *Police and rescue teams searching for Bruno Pereira and Dom Phillips, top left, after they went missing*
PHOTOGRAPH: BRUNO KELLY/REUTERS

▼ *Marcelo Chawan Kulina, 25, hopes to join the patrol teams. 'It's dangerous. When you confront the invaders, they shoot,' he says*



But he said he saw no other way of resisting the illegal forces obliterating the natural resources of his rainforest home, an immense sprawl of coffee-coloured rivers and dense jungle on Brazil's north-western fringe. "They kill our animals and steal the fish from our lakes. I want this to stop," he said. "These invaders have seized control of Indigenous territory."

Chapter Three

Quest for justice

As a new generation of Indigenous activists position themselves on the frontline of a war to protect nature, prosecutors are working to bring the killers of Pereira and Phillips to justice. Three fishers are in high-security prisons awaiting trial for murder: two brothers called Amarildo and Oseney da Costa de Oliveira, and a third man, Jefferson da Silva Lima.

Amarildo, who is better known as Pelado, and Da Silva Lima first confessed to killing Phillips and Pereira after chasing them down the Itaquaí River as they returned from a four-day reporting trip to the entrance of the Javari valley Indigenous territory, though they later changed their story.

"Why the fuck did you do this?" a third brother asked Pelado and Da Silva Lima as he helped them hide the victims' belongings and bodies, according to a confession made by Pelado 11 days after the killings.

Nearly a year later, the answer to that question remains confused. Pelado initially told police he had killed Pereira in a fit of anger, infuriated by the EVU's "persecution" of the fishers who live along the Itaquaí. But recently he offered a different version, claiming they had only shot at Pereira after he had opened fire on them as they went out to fish. He denied it had been premeditated or ordered by someone else.

Speaking outside a courtroom in the city of Tabatinga, where a judge is considering whether the three men should face trial by jury, Oseney's wife, Raimundo Nonato, insisted her husband was innocent. She claims Pelado and Da Silva Lima opened fire in a "moment of rage" prompted by Pereira's dogged pursuit of fishers and poachers. Yet some suspect more powerful and dangerous forces lay behind the killings.

Federal police have named a fourth man – a shadowy local mobster nicknamed Colombia – as the suspected mastermind. Colombia, who reportedly holds Peruvian, Colombian and Brazilian citizenship, is behind bars and reportedly being investigated for allegedly bankrolling the illegal fishing gangs that plunder the Javari Indigenous territory.

Chapter Four

Javari's history of tension

Nonato's life story speaks to the profound and enduring tensions between the Javari's Indigenous and non-Indigenous inhabitants that provide the backdrop to last year's killings. Decades ago, her father moved to the region from Brazil's impoverished north-east to work as a rubber tapper, at a time when the government was urging citizens to occupy what it falsely called a "land without men".

Nonato was born in 1984, in a riverside hamlet called Camboa, as conflict raged between the Indigenous communities and non-Indigenous incomers. Press cuttings from that era paint a picture of the deadly tit-for-tat skirmishes between the Korubo, an Indigenous people known as the *caceteiros* (club carriers), and the loggers and rubber tappers pushing deeper into their lands.

Korubo warriors used wooden cudgels to bludgeon invaders to death. Loggers retaliated using guns and "gifts" of poison-laced food. Indigenous people were "gunned down like wild pigs", one Indigenous expert, Rieli Franciscato, told the newspaper O Globo, which estimated that hundreds of Korubo had been killed. Growing up in the jungle, Nonato caught fleeting glimpses of the Korubo. "They shave half their heads. They're funny-looking and really strong," she remembered. "I was scared of them."

Nonato said she felt relief when, in the late 1990s, Brazil's government began expelling non-Indigenous outsiders, in an attempt to end the conflict and protect Indigenous groups from deadly violence and disease. The eviction forced her family to move closer to Atalaia, where there were schools. Many people, however, resented being kicked out of the territory, believing they were being robbed of the right to make a living off the Javari's abundant fish stocks, wildlife and wood.

"We make our own laws here," Atalaia's then mayor, Marco Antônio Monteiro, told O Globo in 1996. "The Javari valley belongs to us and we will not allow the area to be sealed off."

The following years saw a succession of armed attacks on a government protection base

→

at the conflux of the Itaquaí and Ituí Rivers, one of the main entry points to the Indigenous enclave. The violence reached a peak with the 2019 killing of Maxciel Pereira dos Santos, an Indigenous protection agent who had worked closely with Pereira and who was shot dead in Tabatinga. His killers were never caught and the case appeared to have been forgotten until last year's murders thrust it back into the spotlight.

As the Javari valley was closed to outsiders, Pelado's family relocated to Ladário, the first riverside village outside the territory's border, on the banks of the Itaquaí.

Chapter five

One suspect's journey

One of the last photographs of Phillips – recovered by forensic scientists from one of Pereira's mobile phones – was taken in Ladário, two days before the killings, and shows the journalist sitting by the river in flip-flops and a blue T-shirt, chatting to a fisher who is Pelado's brother-in-law.

Pelado's uncle, Raimundo Bento da Costa, 53, remembers an energetic and solicitous teenager who liked to play football. "He wasn't the kind of guy who went around fighting and rowing with people," Costa said. "He was a pretty normal guy."

In 2002, when Pelado was 21, he was hired to take part in an expedition into the Javari commanded by Orlando Possuelo's father, the famed explorer Sydney Possuelo, in search of an Indigenous group known as the Flecheiros, or arrow people.

Scott Wallace, an American journalist and author who took part in that 76-day mission, first met Pelado on the Itaquaí, upstream from where Pereira and Phillips were killed, and described "a very amiable, upbeat kid who laughed a lot, and seemed to get along with everyone".

Pelado was also an expert backwoodsman who built jungle camps and cleared fallen trees as the expedition advanced into the wilderness. "He'd just gotten married and his wife was expecting their first son, so he was really excited about the chance to join the expedition … and the family he was looking forward to raising," Wallace said, recalling Pelado's exhilaration at the prospect of catching sight of the uncontacted Flecheiros.

But over the coming years, Pelado became a source of fear, not pride, along the Itaquaí, according to local sources. His uncle said he had started organising illegal 15- to 20-day fishing expeditions into Indigenous lands, sneaking past the Funai guard post with half a dozen armed collaborators. By packing wooden boats with tonnes of pirarucu fish and a river turtle called the tracajá, Pelado could quadruple an investment of perhaps 10,000 reais (equivalent today to about £1,600).

Costa sensed his nephew had become consumed by greed. "He got too big for his boots. He wanted to be the boss. He wanted to rule over that area," he said.

Bruno Pereira and the EVU's activists stood in the way of that dream, blocking Pelado's forays into the rainforest and reporting his activities to the police. "So he thought: if we kill him, everything will be fine," Costa said.

Leonardo Schmitt, the federal agent now running Atalaia's floating police base, expressed confidence that such a crime would not be repeated after his team's arrival, but cautioned against underestimating "the nerve and audacity of these criminals".

A Rio native, Schmitt is in the Javari for an operation named after the tucandeira, a wasp-like Amazonian ant notorious for its sting. "It's a pretty appropriate symbol [of our mission]," Schmitt said as he toured the waters around Atalaia do Norte in a speedboat, flanked by agents carrying assault rifles. "Our intention is to have a similarly striking presence."

Chapter six

'The land is part of our family'

The EVU's Indigenous activists have chosen a different Amazonian symbol to represent their battle to remember and resist. In the storage room of their Atalaia HQ, four cherry-coloured planks of maçaranduba redwood lie on the floor, the components of a memorial cross that friends plan to erect beside the Itaquaí.

"It's the heart of the forest," said Carlos Travassos, an Indigenous specialist who is helping to train the EVU's patrol teams. "The idea is to mark … the place where they were murdered … to ensure it's never forgotten."

One evening last month, the storeroom was a hive of activity as the EVU's newest volunteers prepared to journey into the rainforest for a five-day training session. "I'm a rookie … but I'm not afraid. I feel courage," said Txema Matis, 23. "The Indigenous are a courageous lot."

Paulo Marubo, a prominent Indigenous leader who was close to Pereira, offered a pre-mission pep talk. "The land is part of our family [and] it's up to each of us to defend our territory. Let's get to work!"

The next day, the 25-strong crew headed to the dilapidated port where Pereira and Phillips had begun their final journey. They cast off into the Javari's turbid, dolphin-filled waters, heading west along the border with Peru, past an abandoned Peruvian police base that had been attacked and torched by armed raiders five months before Phillips and Pereira were killed.

Up on deck, Clenildo Kulina admitted there were risks involved in joining the struggle in which Phillips, Pereira, Maxciel Pereira dos Santos and countless others have died. But the teenager said he felt Pereira's spirit guiding him.

"He's here with us, isn't he?" Kulina said of Pereira, as a flight of swallows swooped over the bow. "We can feel that he is right here, among us – and I think that's where he will always remain."

Crime

The Brazilian Amazon at risk of takeover by mafias – former police chief

Tom Phillips *Rio de Janeiro*
Jonathan Watts *Altamira*

The rapid advance of organised crime groups in the Brazilian Amazon risks turning the region into a vast, conflict-stricken hinterland plagued by heavily armed "criminal insurgents", a former senior federal police chief has warned.

Alexandre Saraiva, who worked in the Amazon from 2011 to 2021, said he feared the growing footprint of drug trafficking mafias in the region could spawn a situation similar to the decades-long drug conflict in Rio de Janeiro, where the police's battle with drug gangs and paramilitaries has claimed tens of thousands of lives.

"I experienced how the state lost control of public security in Rio de Janeiro," Saraiva said. "In the Amazon – if nothing is done in terms of public security – we are facing a continent-sized Rio de Janeiro, with the aggravating factors of borders with major drug producers and an extraordinarily difficult jungle setting."

Yesterday Brazil's president, Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, voiced his own concern and vowed Dom Phillips and Bruno Pereira, killed a year ago following work on Indigenous issues, would not be forgotten. He blamed their killings on the Amazonian "anarchy" unleashed under his predecessor, Jair Bolsonaro.

In a statement to the Guardian, which is marking the men's deaths with the Bruno & Dom project to carry on their work with international collaborators, Lula said the killings "were one of the results of the encouragement of anarchy and environment crime and illegal mining in the Amazon".

"In the name of a sovereign Brazil, the planet, and the legacy and memory of Dom and Bruno, we are fighting to revive policies to protect Indigenous peoples and the Amazon rainforest, in the Javari valley where they died and in the whole region.

"We will not abandon this struggle for the planet, nor will we forget Dom Phillips and Bruno Pereira." He

▼ *An illegal mining camp near the huts of an Indigenous tribe in Yanomami territory in Roraima*
PHOTOGRAPH: ALAN CHAVES/AFP





promised an independent investigation into their killings "so that those responsible can be punished".

Saraiva, the author of a recent book called Jungle: loggers, miners and corruption in a Lawless Amazon, warned of dire consequences for the rainforest and its inhabitants if criminal gangs were allowed to grow into powerful armies, as in Colombia.

"We will have criminal insurgents ... [whose] ideology is money. We will have areas of conflagration, of major conflict between groups fighting over areas of illegal gold and timber extraction. In the middle of this, we will have Indigenous victims. And we will face immense logistical difficulties in combating this."

A year after the killing of Phillips, a British journalist, and the Brazilian Indigenous expert Pereira, the Guardian has joined 15 international news organisations to investigate organised crime and resource extraction in the Brazilian Amazon, in an effort coordinated by Forbidden Stories, the Paris-based nonprofit organisation continuing the work of reporters who are threatened, censored or killed.

Figures collated for the Bruno & Dom project by the Brazilian Forum on Public Safety (FBSP) paint a bleak portrait of organised crime's deadly impact on the region, showing that:

✱ With more than 8,000 deaths, the rate of intentional lethal violent crime in the Brazilian Amazon's nine states was more than 50% higher than in the rest of the country last year.

✱ In Amazonas state, where Pereira and Phillips were among 1,432 people killed last year, the murder rate was 74% above the national average; 2021 was even more violent with 1,571 victims and a violent death rate of 36.8 per 100,000 inhabitants – five times that of the US.

✱ The number of people killed by military and civil police grew 71% in the Amazon from 2016 to 2021, compared with 35% in the rest of Brazil. The Amazon jail population grew 35.1% from 2016 to 2022 compared with 14.1% elsewhere, helping prison-run factions to flourish in overcrowded jails.

✱ Brazil's two most powerful crime factions – São Paulo's PCC (First Capital Command) and Rio's CV (Red Command) – now operate in all nine Amazon states, as do at least 15 other regional crime groups, including Os Crias, the Família do Norte and Class A Command.

Last year the FBSP revealed that the Amazon contained 10 of Brazil's 30 most violent municipalities. They included remote illegal mining and drug smuggling hubs such as Jacareacanga and Japurá, and Novo Progresso, a deforestation hotspot from where Phillips reported for the Guardian in 2020. All three towns had staggeringly high murder rates above 100 per 100,000 inhabitants.

The advance of organised crime was laid bare by the killings of Pereira and Phillips in the Javari valley, bordering Colombia and Peru, the world's top cocaine producers. Brazil's environment minister, Marina Silva, told the Guardian violence had long been "a hallmark of the predatory occupation of the Amazon", pointing to the murders of activists such as Chico Mendes and Sister Dorothy Stang, in 1988 and 2005.

The military dictatorship's decision to colonise the Amazon in the 1960s – supposedly to stop foreign powers commandeering the sparsely populated region – produced a deadly struggle for land and resources, devastated Indigenous communities and caused deforestation to soar.

'We will have criminal insurgents whose ideology is money. We will have areas of conflagration. In the middle, we will have Indigenous victims'

Silva said the "overlapping of multiple forms of criminality" in the Amazon now meant the state needed to increase its presence in affected regions.

She highlighted the new government's battle to evict illegal miners with links to the PCC from the Yanomami Indigenous territory.

The Public Safety Forum's president, Renato Sérgio de Lima, said the statistics collected by his group's researchers underlined how the arrival of drug factions had made a bad situation worse, causing Amazon murder rates to soar even as they fell elsewhere in Brazil.

Lima traced the advance of such groups into the Amazon to 2016 when a notorious drug trafficker was murdered on Brazil's border with Paraguay. The assassination helped the PCC consolidate control of the drug smuggling route focused on the border town of Ponta Porã, forcing the CV to look north to the Amazon.

The CV's destination was Tabatinga, a scruffy town on the borders of Colombia and Peru, near where Phillips and Pereira were killed.

Lima estimated that the cocaine smuggled through Brazil was now responsible for 4% of the country's GDP – with 40% of those illegal profits coming through the Amazon.

$25bn

Value of drug profits coming via the Amazon, contributing to the 4% of Brazil's GDP ascribed to cocaine

"We are talking about something like $25bn (£20bn) being injected into the Amazon's economy every year, and the region isn't ready to deal with this," he said, warning that the response from the armed forces had been woefully inadequate, with the army and navy seizing only 41 firearms in 2022.

Aerial images filmed by Brazil's Globoplay, one of the news organisations involved in the Bruno & Dom project, showed a suspected cocaine laboratory and a series of coca farms that had been carved out of forest on the Peruvian side of the Javari. "If the Brazilian state doesn't intervene in an urgent and firm manner we're going to have [entire] regions that are run by narco-traffickers," said Beto Marubo, a prominent Indigenous leader who was close to Pereira.

Lima said that if nothing was done, "the military's fear [of losing control of the Amazon] will become almost a self-fulfilling prophesy. We will in effect lose sovereignty over the region and it will be consolidated as the main narco-trafficking smuggling route in Brazil and to Europe."

Rodrigo Chagas, an Amazon-based researcher who is studying the drug gangs' rapid expansion for the FBSP, echoed the warnings of "Colombianisation", which could lead to security forces launching a catastrophic "war on drugs" of the sort that has blighted Brazil's neighbour for decades.

"It's possible the Amazon will see tremendous havoc. This is a scenario that worries me, because the public security responses we tend to see are 'war on drugs'-style responses – a war which is utterly detrimental to local populations," Chagas said.

Saraiva, who was the federal police chief in three Amazon states, Amazonas, Maranhão and Roraima, noted Brazil's fear of an "external enemy" annexing the Amazon. "Meanwhile, we have an internal criminal insurgent which is corroding the Brazilian nation from within [and] it's happening far faster than we imagine."

In 2019, shortly before Pereira was forced from his job with the government's Indigenous protection agency, Funai, Saraiva, as police chief, helped him launch a big anti-mining operation in the Javari region. Sixty illegal mining dredges were destroyed, putting Pereira "in a very delicate position", Saraiva believes.

"In the Javari Valley we have a convergence between drug trafficking, illegal fishing, illegal logging and mining. And in the middle of all this, there was a guy called Bruno [trying to fight environmental crime]" – a man with "selflessness in his DNA".

Federal police have named a shadowy local figure with suspected ties to organised crime as the alleged mastermind behind last year's killings. Experts say at least four Brazilian drug factions – the CV, PCC, Os Crias and the Família do Norte – operate in the region, as well as groups from Colombia and Peru.

Saraiva said: "The mafia goes wherever there's money. It doesn't care if it's environmental crime, people-smuggling, cocaine. And what they see there [in the Amazon] is gold and wood that's being sold for a very high price. It's obvious that it wouldn't take them long to get involved in this."

Final glimpses

Images of pair recovered from Pereira's phone



▼ *A selfie of Bruno Pereira, below, taken on a mission in Javari valley in May 2022, two weeks before he and journalist Dom Phillips were killed*

▼ *Phillips, bottom, chatting with a local man in Ladário two days before he was shot dead*

PHOTOGRAPHS: BRUNO PEREIRA

Tom Phillips

Some of the last images of Dom Phillips and Bruno Pereira have been found after Indigenous activists recovered a phone Pereira was carrying when the men were killed in the Amazon last year.

The phone was found last October when activists from Univaja, the Indigenous association with which Pereira worked, returned to a stretch of flooded forest along the Itaquaí River where the men's bodies were taken after they were shot on their boat on Sunday 5 June 2022.

With the help of a metal detector, the group found items belonging to the victims, including Phillips's UK press card, two spiral notebooks the longtime Guardian contributor had taken on the four-day reporting trip into the Javari valley region, and one of two phones Pereira was carrying.

Indigenous activists and police found other items belonging to the men in the same location during last year's 10-day search for their bodies.

After months under water, the notebooks were illegible. But federal police forensic teams recovered several images from the phone, according to the Brazilian broadcaster TV Globo, which was with the activists when they made the discovery.

✱ They include one photograph taken on the afternoon of 3 June that shows the journalist chatting to a local man in Ladário, the village where one of his alleged killers, Amarildo da Costa de Oliveira, grew up. The man Phillips is talking to is Oliveira's brother-in-law, Laurindo Alves.

Another photo, taken shortly after 7am on 5 June, shows Phillips sitting in a boat near São Rafael, another fishing village on the Itaquaí. Minutes later, after casting off, Phillips and Pereira came under attack.

Da Costa de Oliveira, known as Pelado, and another local fisher, Jefferson da Silva Lima, last year confessed to the crime, telling police they were angry over Pereira's "persecution" of fishers he accused of illegal poaching. However, when they appeared before a federal judge this month the men claimed Pereira had attacked them and they had shot back in self-defence. The victims' families and friends dismissed those claims as having no basis in reality.

The recovered phone also contained two videos that appear to support descriptions of events in the days before the killings. The videos, shot just before 8am on 4 June 2022, show Oliveira travelling down the Itaquaí past the shack where Phillips and Pereira were staying in a community called Lago do Jaburu, a few hundred metres from the Javari valley Indigenous territory.

Earlier that morning, members of EVU, the Indigenous patrol team Pereira had helped create, had spotted Oliveira travelling in the other direction, towards the protection base at the entrance to the Indigenous enclave. Patrollers say Oliveira threatened them by raising his gun into the air when he was challenged.

The owner of the house where Phillips and Pereira were staying, a fisher called Raimundo Bento da Costa, remembered Phillips photographing Oliveira at Pereira's request as he returned along the Itaquaí. "Bruno told [Dom] to take a photo and he took one ... and showed it to us afterwards. [Oliveira] had loads of cartridges, red ones, [on his belt]," said Costa, who is Oliveira's uncle.

Twenty-four hours after those images were taken, according to their confessions, Oliveira and Da Silva Lima killed Phillips and Pereira as they came down the same river.

The phone also contained two aerial videos from a flyover during which illegal mining dredges were spotted along the Jaquirana River.




The climate crisis is ours to crack
Every day, 1 million trees are cut down to make traditional toilet paper. We think it's pretty crap, but your bum can help make a difference with double length, recycled loo roll. This is your time to stand, nay, sit down for what you believe in.
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For more information on the length of our rolls versus other products, please visit whogivesacrap.org/tp-comparison

Art review

Rich and seductive, Ofili's new suite of work is an earthly delight





▲ Chris Ofili began the paintings in 2017 and completed them this year

Chris Ofili: The Seven Deadly Sins
Victoria Miro Gallery, London
★★★★★

Adrian Searle

Cloven-hoofed, carnal and knowing, the devil is prominent in all seven of Chris Ofili's large-scale and deeply complex paintings in The Seven Deadly Sins suite. As much pagan fertility god as father of lies and temptation, the devil, half-hidden in the undergrowth, lounging in plain sight, or just smelling the flowers, he - and perhaps sometimes she - is everywhere. Sometimes, we just catch a glint of those pearlescent horns, the swish of a snaking tail, which makes its serpentine way through a sensual world of natural abundance and luxuriant growth.

Looking at these new paintings by Ofili, your eye slides and drifts, trying to catch hold, but it keeps on slipping and gets pulled under, caught by currents and undertows and dragged around. Ofili captures your sight and makes you aware of the act of your own seeing. Bridget Riley does this too, in a very different way. Every mark, every dot or sinuous line in Ofili's painting is deliberate, the result of a conscious touch or series of touches. Every inch clamours for attention. Although rich and dense, most of these works are thinly, almost transparently painted, till suddenly, in one that recalls Fragonard's rococo The Swing, there's a swerve to thickly applied, clotted opacity. The Seven Deadly Sins are paintings in constant transition: between surface and depth, light and dark; between mythology and religion, the sacred and profane. Begun in 2017, and worked on in Barbados and Trinidad where Ofili lives, the paintings were all completed this year. They don't hit you all at once. Limbs appear and disappear, fold and spread. You can never quite count the bodies. They're left incomplete, or glimpsed as voluptuous bulges and extrusions, camouflaged by constant shifts in touch and application.

White egrets fly across one, passing between pairs of elegant legs. Scale shifts and shifts again. Souls swirl in a vortex as Pan plays a pipe. There are palmettos and carnal flowers and leaf-forms, writhing stems and snaking tendrils that make me think of the Viennese Secessionists and of Hilma af Klint - if only the visionary theosophist and abstractionist had left Sweden, gone to the Caribbean and discovered sex. Franz Marc is in there (Ofili has long been fascinated by Marc and Kandinsky's Der Blaue Reiter), and William Blake too, with his swooning spirits and angels, as well as his weird anatomies.



▲ The Fountain, 2017–23

PHOTOGRAPHS: JACK HEMS/CHRIS OFILI/ COURTESY OF THE ARTIST AND VICTORIA MIRO



◀ The Swing, 2020-2023, recalls Fragonard's rococo masterpiece

▲ White egrets fly between pairs of elegant legs in The Great Beauty, 2020-23

> **Pride, greed, wrath, gluttony, lust, envy and sloth: a painter might need these urges to get going and keep at it**

Ofili's work keeps developing. Now 54, he makes art that is always recognisable, but he hasn't pinned himself down. One thing always leading to another, in novel ways. I am reminded of Sigmar Polke, not just because of Polke's use of dots, or that the German painter also painted the devil. Ofili, like Polke, is interested in the altered states paintings may conjure.

Ornamentation and visual excess have always featured in Ofili's art. Earlier, there were coloured map-pins in balls of elephant dung, crowds of cut-out faces with afro hair, snippets of collaged porn, drifts of glitter trapped in lakes of resin, painted lattices and repetitive marking and patterning. Now there are swarms of dots and painted points. Like constellations and fireflies, cosmic rays and radiation, the dots cascade and rise like motes in the air and bubbles in a glass. They deluge and blizzard and fizz, veiling our vision.

I'm reminded how the world atomises when the first rush of a drug kicks in. Voluptuous, narcotic, symbolist phantasmagorias in which nature is both fecund and corrupt, these paintings are among the most seductive things Ofili has ever done. If the plant life is not altogether benign, what of the little black faces sucking on flower stems and looking on from the margins? There are some very weird moments here. The paintings even feel a bit dangerous.

Maybe Ofili, who was once a Manchester altar boy, has made a Faustian pact. Pride, greed, wrath, gluttony, lust, envy and sloth: a painter might need these urges to get going and keep at it. They're all part of the creative armoury. I have an over-riding feeling that these paintings hold secrets, which are a good thing for any art to have. They tantalise and beguile. I still haven't got to the bottom of them. Perhaps there isn't one.

Until 29 July

Items found in McCann search 'not yet confirmed as evidence'

Tobi Thomas

German prosecutors said a number of items recovered in searches last week that could be linked to Madeleine McCann's disappearance had not yet been confirmed as evidence.

The searches, which took place in Portugal after requests from German investigators, involved a large section of the Barragem do Arade reservoir being cordoned off, in an area about 30 miles from Praia da Luz, where Madeleine went missing in 2007.

Police flattened an area of woodland and dug holes near the reservoir as part of the three-day operation.

In 2020, German police said they believed Madeleine to be dead and identified Christian Brückner, a convicted sex offender, as probably responsible.

Christian Wolters, the German prosecutor for the city of Braunschweig, said: "A number of items were seized as part of the investigation. These will be in the evaluated in the coming days and weeks.

"Whether individual items actually have a connection to the Madeleine McCann case cannot yet be said. The investigations conducted here in Braunschweig against the 46-year-old suspect are expected to continue for a long time."

He added that the joint operation between German, British and Portuguese authorities went "excellently".

After last week's searches, Portuguese police said materials were sent to Germany for testing. They were given the go-ahead to search the area after German prosecutors received "certain tips" about the case. Heavy machinery, sniffer dogs and pickaxes were used during the operation.

Brückner is in prison in Germany for the rape of a woman in Praia da Luz in 2005, and is suspected of other sexual assaults in the area between 2000 and 2017.

Mark Hofmann, a criminal profiler in Germany, said Brückner, who is serving a seven-year sentence, had a history of keeping "trophies" from his crimes. He said: "From chat histories with like-minded people and from other crimes, it is known that Christian B tends to do exactly this: documenting his crimes."

Brückner has reportedly denied any involvement in Madeleine's disappearance. Madeleine was three when she vanished while on holiday with her parents in Praia da Luz, after they left her and her younger siblings asleep in their apartment while they went out to dinner with friends.

The Home Office granted an extra £110,000 in funding this financial year for the Metropolitan police to assist with finding Madeleine, down from just over £300,000 last year. The total funding given to Operation Grange amounts to just under £13.1m since 2011.

CBI plans widespread job losses as it fights for survival

Anna Isaac



▼ *Rain Newton-Smith, the CBI's new director general, has promised a change in culture at the organisation*
PHOTOGRAPH: DARREN STAPLES/GETTY IMAGES

The UK's most prominent business lobby group, the Confederation of British Industry, is to make a swath of its workers redundant as it fights for survival amid a crisis prompted by sexual misconduct allegations.

The CBI needs to cut its wage bill by a third within months, staff were told at a meeting yesterday, according to sources, with management aiming initially to use voluntary redundancies.

A spokesperson for the lobby group, which employs 300 people, confirmed it had to make "difficult decisions". "It will be a smaller and refocused organisation in the future," they said.

On Wednesday the CBI opened a confidence vote and laid out plans for a reformed culture and governance. The result of the vote is expected to be released shortly after an extraordinary general meeting (EGM) next Tuesday. "With our prospectus for a renewed CBI now published, we will work with our staff and members on our core mission to help UK business succeed," the spokesperson said. "We believe there is a strong basis for our members to continue to back us at our EGM."

The organisation's new director general, Rain Newton-Smith, said on Wednesday: "I have my eyes wide open about what we need to learn." She added: "People need to know the code of conduct and we need to lay the foundations for a strong speak-up environment."

More than 50 of its most high-profile business members quit or suspended ties with the CBI after claims of sexual misconduct, first reported by the Guardian. Its total income was £25m in 2021, of which £22m was from membership fees.

£22m

The CBI's income in 2021 from membership fees. Its total annual income was £25m

While staff had expected some cost-cutting after the loss of members, the pace and scale of the redundancies still came as a surprise to some. Sources claimed staff have been left demoralised by the handling of the misconduct scandal, which has included revelations of sexual harassment, sexual assault including rape, and drug taking.

One insider said: "It's been awful, and it feels unfair that some people's behaviour will cost others, who have done nothing wrong, so much."

The toughest sell to regain support, according to one senior figure at a company that is still a member of the group, is for business to believe that a CBI in a new form can "win back the ear of government". That would be a "leap of faith" for members as central and local government and the Labour party had suspended engagement after the allegations, the industry leader said, though they added: "There's still a business herd that may need somewhere to go, and it hasn't found a home yet."

The CBI's board has sought legal advice in recent weeks about options to restructure its activities, including the possibility of insolvency. A spokesperson said: "We know the CBI will need to be smaller and refocused in the future. The board has sought advice on matters of restructuring as may be appropriate, as any responsible board would."

Second member of Birmingham Six dies, aged 93

Rory Carroll
Ireland correspondent

One of the Birmingham Six wrongly jailed for IRA bombings has died aged 93. Hugh Callaghan died on 27 May after being taken to hospital in London with chest pains, friends said. A passionate singer, he serenaded hospital staff almost until the end.

The six were Irish men living in England who were rounded up after the IRA blew up two pubs in Birmingham in 1974, killing 21 people, in one of the worst atrocities of the Troubles.

Police beat and brutalised the men - they put alsatians in Callaghan's cell - and obtained false confessions that led to life sentences. A campaign led by the Labour MP Chris Mullin paved the way to eventual exoneration and freedom in 1991 after 16 years in jail. After his release Callaghan became involved in Irish community organisations in England and lived his last years in Hackney, east London, with his partner, Adeline Masterson.

Another of the Birmingham Six, Richard McIlkenny, died in 2006.



Parents call for universities to have legal duty of care to students

Sally Weale
Education correspondent

Students who are struggling with their mental health can wait a whole academic year to receive help from university counselling services, while others are allowed only six sessions for their entire degree, according to a new survey of parents, students and university staff.

Parents criticised UK universities for failing to contact them when their child was struggling with their mental health. Others said their concerns were not escalated when they got in touch with their child's university.

Some accused providers of failing to act, even when a student had failed to turn up for a single lecture all term. "We did not know anything was a problem until our son sent us a message indicating that he did not want to live," said one parent, whose son had stopped going to classes. Another said: "My son did not attend lectures for a whole term due to mental health issues and no one noticed or cared."

Support for mental health at university varies widely across the sector and was described as "woeful" by one person. "Students can wait a whole academic year to be seen and supported, and the burden of care is often left with personal tutors in the department," one university worker said. Other students are entitled to just six counselling sessions over the course of their degree and can face long waiting lists.

"My son's experience was very poor, despite a history of mental health struggles and a [special educational needs and disability] SEND diagnosis, he was not supported sufficiently. No attempt was ever made to reach out to him," one parent said.

The survey, which attracted 1,500 responses, was conducted by the Commons petition committee after more than 128,000 people signed a petition. On Monday MPs will discuss the petition's call for a statutory duty of care from higher education providers towards students. It follows widespread coverage of student suicides in recent years. The survey was circulated among those who had signed the petition.

It states: "No general statutory duty of care exists in HE [higher education]. Yet, a duty of care is owed to students, and the government should legislate for this. HE providers should know what their duty is. Students must know what they can expect. Parents expect their children to be safe at university."

Responding to the petition, the government said higher education providers already had a general duty of care not to cause harm to their students through their own actions, and further legislation to create a statutory duty of care would be "disproportionate".

The parents who took part in the survey disagreed. "Duty of care exists in all areas of work and apprenticeships but not for vulnerable young adults," said one. "Lack of duty of care in higher education is a serious omission in the UK legislation that needs to be rectified. We need a level playing field. Students should have the same right to duty of care as everyone else."

Another said: "It is not enough for universities to be advised on what they should do. A statutory duty of care is a bare minimum for such large businesses. There are more regulations in place for shelf stackers than there are for students at university."

Robert Abrahart, whose daughter Natasha killed herself in 2018 while a student at Bristol University, described the current system as a "lawless wild west".

He added: "Given no relevant legal responsibility, there can be no accountability when things go badly wrong. Most providers could design and implement safer processes and procedures. But they won't, because they don't want to, and don't have to – so something needs to change. The proposed duty would establish a minimum standard of professional behaviour – requiring all members of staff to do what might reasonably be expected."

Just 1% of the students who took part in the survey said their university was "very supportive" of their mental health. One said: "The systems for accessing mental health support are complex and not fit for purpose for those suffering poor mental health. Please make it easy – a 24-hour support line. Don't fob us off with text lines and the Samaritans line."

'Some students can wait a whole academic year to be seen and supported'

University worker
Survey respondent

Chelsea flower garden inspires additions to bug-friendly RHS plant list

Helena Horton
Environment reporter

A bug-friendly garden at Chelsea flower show has inspired additions to the Royal Horticultural Society (RHS) pollinator-friendly plant list.

The garden, displayed at the show in London last week, was designed by the horticulturist Tom Massey in collaboration with the Royal Entomological Society (RES). It used various techniques to attract insects, including gravel for the bugs to burrow in rather than paving stones, piled-up logs, and a large range of pollinator-friendly plants, including 106 different species.

It also featured a working lab in the middle, and scientists from the RES worked all week counting and identifying insects. They found 65 different species of insect throughout the week, and listed the bugs' most popular plants.

They found lots of insect activity on *Trifolium incarnatum* (crimson clover), which is now likely to be added to the RHS "plants for pollinators" list, as is *Teucrium fruticans* (tree germander). Scientists also observed that medlar had been particularly useful for bumblebees and was a great choice for small gardens.

The RHS keeps and updates the plants to inform its members how to attract pollinating insects to their gardens. It will be updated over time using ongoing observations of plants used frequently by pollinators.

Although it was a small-scale experiment that went on for only a week, scientists plan to use some of the findings to inform their future work.

Dr Hayley Jones, an RHS senior entomologist, said:"We were so pleased to find such a diversity of insects feeding on the flowers … adding to evidence of just how important our gardens are for pollinators as well as all kinds of other wildlife.

"We hope the counts at Chelsea will help show gardeners that they can make a real difference to pollinators in their area, and once they start adding a range of flowering plants to their plots pollinators will quickly follow and make use of the new food resource."



▲ *Tom Massey outside his Royal Entomological Society garden at the show*

▼ *Crimson clover, a plant for pollinators*

PHOTOGRAPH: JAMES MANNING/PA



Languages and creative arts at GCSE and A-Level falling out of favour

Rachel Hall

Languages and the creative arts are falling out of favour among GCSE and A-level students, who are increasingly opting for more vocational subjects such as computing and business studies.

Provisional figures for England show exam entries for German have fallen by 17% for A-level students and 6% for GCSE studies, while Spanish and French have fallen 13% at A-level, although there has been a 5% increase for Spanish GCSE, and French entries stayed at a similar level.

Computing A-level entries rose 15% on last year, contributing to a 65% rise since 2019. At GCSE, entries are up 12% year on year.

Business studies is becoming increasingly popular, with provisional GCSE entries up 13% – and 27% since 2019 – and a 6% increase in A-level entries. Economics entries also increased, by 5% at GCSE and 7% at A-level.

There are more entries for this summer's exams for both GCSE and A-levels, according to figures published yesterday by the exams regulator Ofqual. GCSE provisional entries increased by 3.6%, from 5,349,250 in summer 2022 to 5,543,840 this summer, while A-level entries rose by 2.3%, from 788,125 last summer to 806,410.

Not all subjects have benefited from the uplift. Performing arts A-level entries have dropped by almost a fifth (19%), from 1,175 in 2022 to 955 this summer, while music and drama have both fallen by 7% year-on-year.

At GCSE level, entries for performing arts are down 16% on 2022, while music has seen a 12% fall year-on-year, with drama down 7%.

Entries for art and design subjects are down 3% year-on-year for both A-levels and GCSEs.

Last summer English literature fell out of the top 10 most popular subjects at A-level for the first time. There has been a 3% rise this year, though it remains down by 9% on 2019.

Biology, chemistry, physics and maths all saw small increases at GCSE level.



15%

Amount by which the entries for computing at A-level have risen on last year – a 65% increase since 2019


A good deal for you
and Mama Earth
Perfect for
amateur juggling
Super long,
double length
rolls
Made from
100% recycled
paper
100% Recycled
Toilet Paper
who gives a crap
Helps reduce deforestation –
yay trees!
A good planet
is hard to find
Good toilet paper that helps
protect ours? Easy peasy.
4 double length rolls
1 of our rolls
2 average rolls
who gives a crap
bamboo | recycled
AVAILABLE AT
WAITROSE
& PARTNERS
Selected stores. Subject to availability. For more information on the length of our rolls versus other products, please visit whogivesacrap.org/tp-comparison

Zuckerberg muscles in on tech bros' extreme fitness regimes





Esther Addley

You've got the billions, you've got the global brand domination – what comes next? An extreme fitness regime, of course.

Mark Zuckerberg has revealed he has taken part in an intensive challenge in which he ran a mile, did 100 pull-ups, 200 press-ups and 300 squats before running another mile, all while wearing a 9kg weighted vest.

The Facebook founder, in a post on his own page, said he had completed the "Murph challenge" in 39 minutes 58 seconds. One user said this would put him in the top 1% of those who had completed the event, which is named in memory of a US navy seal who was killed in Afghanistan.

Complimented on his pull-ups, the multibillionaire (worth £93bn or so at present), said: "The last mile run when your legs are torched from the squats and your heart rate is pegged is pretty brutal too."

Other recent posts from the 39-year-old celebrated the medals he won in his first jiu-jitsu tournament (gold and silver) and a sub-20 minute 5k. "I actually stopped running for a while and got stronger from [mixed martial arts]. Then I ran for about a month before this race and realized I was faster than before," Zuckerberg told an impressed commenter.

Gone are the days when tech bros were characterised by shapeless T-shirts, junk food physiques and the pallor of hours spent behind a screen. As demonstrated by Jeff Bezos's physical transformation, several years ago, from nondescript, balding books bloke to ultra-hench Vin Diesel parody, billionaires these days are buff.

The Amazon founder, now 59, enlisted Tom Cruise's trainer to transform his physique, reportedly working out daily with exercises like rowing and weight training. Having admitted in 2017 to never having read a nutrition label in his life, he is now said to favour an ultra low carb diet (Bezos liked Whole Foods so much, he bought the company in 2021).

▲ *Mark Zuckerberg with his jiu-jitsu training team, and top left, taking on the 'Murph challenge'*
PHOTOGRAPHS: INSTAGRAM



'Vin Diesel parody': Amazon's Jeff Bezos

None of which is terribly outré by Silicon Valley standards these days. Bill Gates may have taken to the treadmill every morning but that's nothing compared with the "biohacking" standards of today's tech tycoons.

One, Bryan Johnson, says he spends $2m a year to stay youthful, including having transfusions of his own son's blood. Jack Dorsey, the former Twitter CEO, has said he eats one meal a day; for breakfast he has water with salt.

Another tech exec, Serge Faguet, went viral after revealing he avoids all sugar and processed foods, fasts and exercises rigidly, has an implanted glucose monitor and wears a $6,000 hearing aid despite having perfect hearing. "People here [in Silicon Valley] have a technical mindset, so they think of everything as an engineering problem," he said.

It's an approach that is familiar to Livvy Probert, a personal trainer who often works with business leaders in the UK. "Now they've succeeded at business, they're looking at their next challenge," she said.

This type of client loved knowing about their performance in detail, measuring biometrics like body fat, waist circumference, blood pressure and sleep patterns, said Probert, co-founder of the wellbeing firm Hawq.

"They love it because the more they can track, the more they can improve. And they want to know not only how they can prove themselves – generally they want to be better than other people as well. One of the things that I particularly get asked is, 'Where does that put me on the ratio of other people? I want to make sure that I'm at the top.'"

But not everyone in the tech world takes the same approach. "To be totally frank, I wouldn't exercise at all if I could," Elon Musk said in 2020, telling an interviewer that while he had a personal trainer, it had been "a while" since he had seen him. The world's richest man also said: "I'd rather eat tasty food and live a shorter life."



▲ *Halle Bailey is Ariel in Disney's live-action Little Mermaid remake*

IMDb changes rating system after 'review bombing' of Little Mermaid

Catherine Shoard
Film editor

The biggest film website in the world has said the new, live action remake of The Little Mermaid was subjected to "review bombing", with mass negative reactions posted by bots to bring down the average review score.

The Internet Movie Database (IMDb) said it had made changes to its ratings system after detecting the "unusual voting activity" on the film's reviews page.

Since its release last week, The Little Mermaid has attracted about 43,000 user ratings on the site, with an average rating of seven out of 10. This broadly aligns with the general tone of reviews on the site, which are slightly more positive than those on sites such as Metacritic, which aggregate professional critics' verdicts.

Yet on IMDb, The Little Mermaid has also been awarded 39% 1-star ratings – the lowest possible score, and more negative than most professional reviewers, who were largely lukewarm towards the Disney film.

IMDb wrote that its "rating mechanism has detected unusual voting activity on this title. To preserve the reliability of our rating system, an alternate weighting calculation has been applied." A similar message was previously used when a large number of atypical scores were observed.

Last year, Amazon – which owns IMDb – introduced 72-hour pre-moderation for user reviews of The Lord of the Rings: The Rings of Power, which had attracted a backlash for casting people of colour as residents of Middle-earth.

The Little Mermaid has been the target of racism since it was announced that a black actor, Halle Bailey, would take on the lead role of Ariel. The character was depicted as a red-haired mermaid in the previous animated movie. When footage from the new film was first released, a #NotMyAriel hashtag picked up online momentum.

Bailey spoke to the Guardian last month of her hope that such representation would be helpful to young black women."If I would have had a black mermaid [as a girl], that would have … changed my whole perspective, my whole life, my confidence, my self-worth. You're able to see a person who looks like you."

Care home resident subjected to homophobic abuse, says partner

Mabel Banfield-Nwachi

A man who said his partner experienced homophobic abuse while in a care home that left him with bruising and an apparent cigarette burn has said people are being pushed "back into the closet" when at their most vulnerable.

Ted Brown said his civil partner, the LGBT activist Noel Glynn, was beaten, taunted and mistreated by staff who also refused to recognise their relationship – referring to Brown as Glynn's "friend".

Brown said two whistleblowers confirmed his suspicions that Glynn had been attacked by staff at Albany Lodge nursing home in Croydon, in south London, because of his sexuality after he was "outed as a gay man". The whistleblowers claimed that, on one occasion when Glynn was walking through the home with two other residents, two staff members approached him and asked: "Are you a gay man? Do you like gay men?"

He was then allegedly dragged into his room and other residents heard a "disturbance going on and Noel's voice," Brown said. The care home suspended the staff members for two weeks, but Brown said they returned to the home "on another floor".

In January 2019, Glynn told a social worker: "I don't like it here, they beat me up." The police took no action after Brown reported the suspected abuse. The social worker recommended that he be moved but Glynn was left there for nine more months.

Brown had initially become concerned about Glynn's wellbeing when he found out he had tried to leave the home four times. He brought a civil case against Lambeth council on behalf of Glynn, who had dementia. In a proposed settlement, the council has admitted Glynn's placement there from December 2018 to October 2019 was "not in his best interests" and offered £30,000 compensation. No payment has yet been made.

Brown was able to act on his partner's behalf after being granted power of attorney. As part of his responsibilities, Brown paid £1,400 a month towards Glynn's care. "I was paying to basically have Noel beaten up," he said. Glynn died in the early hours of 31 December 2021 after a fall.



▲ *Ted Brown, left, with his partner, the LGBT activist Noel Glynn*

Brown said older LGBT people were being forced "back into the closet" because of fears of how they would be treated in care homes.

A Lambeth council spokesperson said: "When allegations of abuse were made, the council fully investigated and shared the outcome with the police for follow-up action.

"We are unable to comment further on this case due to ongoing legal action, but recognise there is a wider systemic issue of homophobic discrimination within the UK care system which locally Lambeth council is working hard to address."

A spokesperson from Future Care Group, which owns Albany Lodge, said it "worked closely with the authorities in an investigation relating to Mr Glynn, which was closed at the time with recommendations that have been implemented".

Eyewitness



▼ **Shepton Mallet, Somerset**
Rupert Uglow, four, stands patiently yesterday during livestock judging at this year's Royal Bath & West Show
PHOTOGRAPH: FINNBARR WEBSTER/GETTY



World



◀ *Journalists Nick McKenzie, centre right, and Chris Masters outside the court in Sydney yesterday at the end of the defamation trial*
PHOTOGRAPH: DAN HIMBRECHTS/AAP

Judge rules Australia's most decorated soldier probably murdered unarmed Afghans

Ben Doherty
Sydney

Australia's most decorated living soldier probably murdered unarmed civilians while serving in Afghanistan, a federal court judge has found.

Sitting in Sydney, Justice Anthony Besanko found that on the balance of probabilities, Ben Roberts-Smith VC kicked a handcuffed prisoner off a cliff in Darwan in 2012 before ordering a subordinate Australian soldier to shoot the injured man dead.

The judge also found that in 2009 Roberts-Smith ordered the killing of an elderly man found hiding in a tunnel in a bombed-out compound, and murdered a disabled man with a prosthetic leg during the same mission, using a machine gun.

The civil judgment, which came after a year-long defamation trial, is not a criminal finding of guilt. A summary has been published by the federal court, with the full reasons due to be published next week after checks for national security concerns.

Lawyers for the three newspapers - the Age, the Sydney Morning Herald and the Canberra Times - sued by Roberts-Smith have asked for several weeks to determine applications around costs of the trial.

The judgment is likely to leave Roberts-Smith liable to pay millions of dollars to the newspapers. The cost of the trial is estimated to be upwards of $35m (£18.3m).

The former SAS corporal had taken out a loan, believed to be $2m, from his employer, the Channel Seven owner Kerry Stokes, to fund his defamation case. He appears almost certain to lose the Victoria Cross medal that he surrendered as collateral. An appeal by Roberts-Smith to the full bench of the federal court is now expected.

Roberts-Smith was not in the courtroom in Sydney for the judgment and was not under any obligation to attend the hearing. He is currently on the resort island of Bali, Indonesia.

As well as finding that Roberts-Smith ordered the killing of an elderly man and murdered a disabled man in 2009, the judge found that he was a "criminal" who "broke the moral and legal rules of military engagement" over an incident at Chenartu in 2012, which resulted in the execution of an Afghan man who was being held prisoner.

> ***'Today is a day of justice. None of the SAS witnesses wanted to go to court'***
>
> **Nick McKenzie**
> *Investigative journalist*

In his summary Besanko ruled that allegations Roberts-Smith was complicit in further murders in southern Afghanistan in 2012 were not proven. But the judge found the newspapers had proved that Roberts-Smith bullied and assaulted his comrades.

Besanko also ruled that the newspapers had failed to prove their allegation that Roberts-Smith committed an act of domestic violence in 2018 against a woman with whom he was having an affair.

Roberts-Smith is Australia's most decorated living soldier and the recipient of the Victoria Cross for "most conspicuous gallantry" during the battle of Tizak in 2010.

He had enjoyed a stellar public reputation, lionised as the exemplar of Australia's ultimately unsuccessful mission in Afghanistan. The most famous soldier of his generation, Roberts-Smith was also named Father of the Year and served as chair of the government's Australia Day council.

But in 2018, the Age, the Sydney Morning Herald and the Canberra Times published a series of articles alleging he engaged in war crimes, including murdering civilians and ordering subordinates to kill civilians in "blooding" incidents.

Roberts-Smith sued the newspapers, telling the court their stories portrayed him as a criminal who had "disgraced" his country and its army. The trial heard extraordinary testimony of killing performed by Australian soldiers, and of a factionalised SAS regiment, riven by internecine fighting over decorations and medals.

Three SAS soldiers accused of murder on separate missions refused in court to answer questions, on the grounds that any truthful answer would be self-incriminatory. Each was permitted not to answer.

The onus of proof in the defamation case rested with the newspapers.

Nick McKenzie and Chris Masters, two of the journalists at the centre of the trial, spoke outside court yesterday. "Today is a day of justice," McKenzie said. "Ben Roberts-Smith brought this case, he came almost every day. But he did not come today."

Masters thanked the newspapers and their legal team. "It was a great call back in June 2018 to run this story. I think it will go down in the history of the news business as one of the great calls," he said.

Robert-Smith's barrister, Arthur Moses SC, said: "We'll obviously consider the lengthy judgment that his honour has delivered and look at the issues."

Additional reporting **Elias Visontay**

Endometriosis
Treatment-changing research from Sydney
Page 27

US debt ceiling
Joe Biden, 'apostle' of bipartisanship
Page 29



Rulings
The alleged war crimes at the centre of the trial

Death at Darwan
One of the key allegations in the trial was that Ben Roberts-Smith, on a mission to the southern Afghan village of Darwan in 2012, marched a handcuffed man named Ali Jan to stand above a 10-metre-high cliff that dropped down to a dry riverbed below. The court heard that Roberts-Smith then "walked forward and kicked the individual in the chest".

The court heard the man survived but was significantly injured. Roberts-Smith then allegedly ordered a subordinate soldier to shoot Ali Jan dead.

Robert-Smith argued the man was a scout for enemy insurgents and therefore a legitimate target.

Both parties agreed reportage of this event conveyed imputations that Roberts-Smith "murdered an unarmed and defenceless Afghan civilian", that he "broke the moral and legal rules of military engagement and is therefore a criminal" and that he "disgraced his country… by his conduct as a member of the SASR [Special Air Service regiment] in Afghanistan".

Judgment: Justice Anthony Besanko found that, on the balance of probabilities, the newspapers established the substantial truth of these imputations.

Whiskey 108
Another prominent allegation concerned a 2009 raid, code-named Whiskey 108, on a bombed-out compound within which a secret tunnel was found.

The newspapers' reporting alleged an elderly man and a younger man with a prosthetic leg were found hiding in the tunnel, and that they came out unarmed and surrendered. Roberts-Smith allegedly ordered a junior soldier on his patrol to execute the elderly man, before Roberts-Smith himself murdered the younger disabled man with his Para machine gun.

The former war hero gave evidence that two men were killed legitimately, in accordance with the Australian troops' rules of engagement, as they were Taliban members trying to flee.

In addition to these allegations, Roberts-Smith claimed this reporting conveyed imputations that "having committed murder by machine gunning a man in Afghanistan with a prosthetic leg, is so callous and inhumane that he took the prosthetic leg back to Australia and encouraged his soldiers to use it as a novelty beer-drinking vessel".

Judgment: Besanko found that, on the balance of probabilities, the newspapers established the substantial truth of these imputations.

Domestic violence claims
Also part of the trial was an allegation that Roberts-Smith punched a woman with whom he was having an affair after an argument following dinner in Canberra in 2018.

The woman told the court that after telling Roberts-Smith her head hurt after falling down stairs, he replied "it's going to fucking hurt more" or "I'll show you hurt" before punching her. Roberts-Smith denied ever hitting her, and claimed the story was a fabrication.

In addition to conveying the imputation he committed domestic violence, Roberts-Smith claimed the articles imputed that he was "a hypocrite who publicly supported Rosie Batty, a domestic violence campaigner, when in private he abused a woman".

Judgment: Besanko said the newspapers had not proved these allegations and he was not satisfied the evidence the court heard was "sufficiently reliable to form the basis of a finding that the assault occurred". However, he found they could rely on the defence of contextual truth for these imputations. That is, the articles containing the allegations could not further harm Roberts-Smith's reputation because other, more serious imputations in the article were found to be substantially true.

Murders at Fasil and Syahchow
The newspapers also reported allegations that Roberts-Smith was complicit in further alleged murders of two Afghan men during missions to Syahchow and Fasil in southern Afghanistan in 2012.

Judgment: Besanko found that the newspapers did not establish the particulars of truth related to these alleged murders.

Bullying and threatening fellow soldiers
Reporting alleged that Roberts-Smith "engaged in a campaign of bullying against a small and quiet soldier called Trooper M, which included threats of violence", the soldier claimed.

Judgment: Besanko found the newspapers were able to prove the truth of this allegation.

The newspapers also reported that Roberts-Smith allegedly threatened to report a soldier known as Trooper J to the international criminal court for firing at civilians, unless Trooper J provided an account of a friendly fire incident consistent with Roberts-Smith's version of events.

Judgment: Besanko was not satisfied this was sufficiently proven, but found the newspapers could rely on the defence of contextual truth for this imputation.

Assaults
The newspapers' reporting alleged incidents of Roberts-Smith either assaulting or authorising the assault of unarmed Afghan civilians. One incident was in 2010, with newspapers alleging he "bashed an unarmed Afghan in the face with his fists and in the stomach with his knee and in so doing alarmed two patrol commanders to the extent that they ordered him to back off".

In 2012, Roberts-Smith allegedly authorised the assault of an unarmed Afghan who was in custody and posed no threat. Also in 2012, he was alleged to have assaulted an unarmed Afghan.

Judgment: Besanko found the newspapers established the substantial truth of these imputations.

Elias Visontay and **Ben Doherty**



▲ *The former SAS soldier Ben Roberts-Smith with the barrister Arthur Moses leaving court in Sydney earlier this year* PHOTOGRAPH:BEN HIMBRECHTS/AAP



▲ *People pass the shelled market in Mayo near Khartoum* PHOTOGRAPH: AFP/GETTY

Shelling of market in poor area south of Khartoum kills 27 and injures scores

Zeinab Mohammed Salih
Khartoum

Twenty seven people have been killed and about 100 injured after a market in a poor area south of Khartoum was shelled, a Sudanese doctors' group has said.

Six tank shells were fired from al-Shajara, one of the few areas the army controls in the Sudanese capital, towards the neighbourhood of Mayo on Wednesday, residents said. Sources said the death toll could rise significantly because many of the injured were unable to get to hospitals to be treated.

Most of those still in Mayo have not been able to afford to leave Khartoum since fighting broke out between the army and the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces (RSF) on 15 April. It is not known to be near any military target in the capital, which is 90% controlled by the RSF.

"Medical staff are under pressure to deal with so many cases with limited staff," the Sudanese doctors' trade union said in a statement. "We call all doctors and medical cadres who are nearby to come to the hospital so they can help."

Abdelmotal Saboon, a volunteer at the nearby al-Bashair hospital, said: "Really it's been the worst day I saw since the beginning of the war, scenes I will always remember of women and children and men in awful shape. I do not know the reason for using the heavy artillery apart from killing innocent people." Mohamed Zain, another Mayo resident, said: "Nobody can afford to leave, all our relatives are here, they cannot flee."

The day before, Abdel-Fattah al-Burhan, head of the Sudanese army and the de facto leader of the country, had said he would pull out of US and Saudi-brokered ceasefire talks, as he accused the RSF of failing to honour its commitments. In front of soldiers at the military headquarters, Burhan said they would use deadly force against the enemy.

"We are carrying this battle on behalf of the Sudanese people, we are seeing what happened to them. We do not want to use deadly force … but if the enemy does not comply and respond we will be obliged to use it. Do not listen to the media, it's fake, the army is one and the army is all over Sudan … all the Sudanese people are soldiers, they are all standing with you in this battle."

US and Saudi mediators have blamed both sides for violating a truce. Parts of Khartoum's neighbouring city of Omdurman have been experiencing heavy artillery fire since Wednesday, with military sources saying they were targeting RSF forces at the national TV station there and a strategic building that was taken by the RSF on Wednesday.

More than 1.2 million people have been displaced internally by the fighting, and an additional 400,000 have fled across borders, the UN said this week. At least 730 have been killed according to official figures, but the real toll is likely to be far higher.

Outside Khartoum, clashes have flared in major cities in the western region of Darfur. A regional rights group said at least 50 people have been killed in the last week in Geneina where hundreds have already been killed in militia attacks. Yesterday the US said it would levy sanctions against people "who are perpetuating the violence" in Sudan.

"The scope and scale of the bloodshed in Khartoum and Darfur, in particular, is appalling," the White House national security adviser Jake Sullivan said. "The failure of the Sudanese armed forces and RSF to abide by the ceasefire only further deepens our concern that the people of Sudan will once again face a protracted conflict and widespread suffering."



▶ *A child aged nine lies under a foil shroud, mourned by her grandfather. She was killed after a high-speed missile attack by Moscow early yesterday in the city of Kyiv*
PHOTOGRAPH: SERGEY DOLZHENKO/EPA

Alexander Lebedev
Sanctions imposed

Ukraine has imposed sanctions on Alexander Lebedev – the former KGB intelligence officer whose son Evgeny sits in the House of Lords – in connection with Vladimir Putin's invasion.

The national security and defence council in Kyiv imposed sanctions on Lebedev Sr last October. The decision emerged yesterday after a decree signed by president Volodymyr Zelenskiy.

Lebedev owns a hotel and other assets in Crimea, the peninsula Putin illegally annexed in 2014. Ukraine accuses Lebedev of actively destabilising its sovereignty by investing in Crimea's tourist industry.

The government has known about the sanctions since last October. The sanctions stop Lebedev moving funds out of Ukraine and making financial transactions inside the country.

Alexander Lebedev did not immediately reply to a message inviting him to comment.
Luke Harding

Russian anti-Putin militia stage second raid on Belgorod, close to Ukrainian border

Dan Sabbagh *Lviv*
Julian Borger *Kharkiv*
Patrick Wintour

Russian anti-Putin partisans said they were conducting a raid on the town of Shebekino a little over four miles across the Ukrainian border in Russia's Belgorod province, the second partisan attack inside the country in less than two weeks.

The Russian Volunteer Corps, based in Ukraine, said it had shelled the local Russian administrative building, while a local Telegram channel posted dramatic footage of a large block struck by multiple fires on the roof.

Vyacheslav Gladkov, the Russian governor of Belgorod oblast, said 12 Russians had been wounded in the fighting, and 29 buildings, including a kindergarten, had been damaged amid "numerous artillery shelling" since Wednesday.

The Russian Volunteer Corps, which is led by a prominent nationalist, said it had allowed Russian forces to retreat to the administrative building before targeting it with Grad rockets. "Very soon we will see the outskirts of Shebekino," a spokesperson for the group, added.

Hours earlier Russia had attacked Kyiv in an early morning high-speed missile attack, leaving three dead, including a nine-year-old girl, and 11 injured, according to Ukrainian authorities. Claims also surfaced that one local shelter was not properly open in time.

Ukraine said that Russia had fired Iskander ballistic and cruise missiles, meaning there was only five or so minutes warning before they struck, although most of the damage appeared to be from falling debris because the missiles were intercepted by the capital's air defences.

Yesterday was International Children's Day in many post-Soviet countries, and Ukraine accused Russia of engaging in terrorism. Mykhailo Podolyak, a senior adviser to Ukraine's president, released a picture of the dead child's grandfather sitting next to the youngster's body, covered in foil. "Eyewitnesses said that the man was crouching over his granddaughter's body until one of his neighbors brought him a chair. He can't move away. He can't understand. He can't breathe. He has lost his life," Podolyak tweeted.

> *'The man's crouching over the body of his granddaughter – he has lost his life'*
>
> **Mykhailo Podolyak**
> *Adviser to Zelenskiy*

The worst affected area was Kyiv's eastern district of Desnianskiy, where debris fell on a children's hospital and a block of flats, also damaging two schools and a police station.

A distraught man interviewed on Kyiv television said his wife was one of the victims of yesterday's attack. He said she had run to a local shelter after an air raid siren went off but it was closed and she was caught out in the open and struck by falling metal from an intercepted missile.

Police were investigating, officials reported. The head of Desnianskyi district said a guard had opened central entrances to the shelter but that some people had not been able to get in, possibly because there had been so little time to react and take action.

Following the fall of Bakhmut in the eastern Donbas to Russian forces after a year-long battle, the war has shifted towards fresh attacks on civilian centres ahead of a widely anticipated counter offensive by Ukraine. Russia has resorted to a pattern of near daily strikes on Kyiv – 17 in May alone – using a mixture of drones, ballistic and cruise missiles, apparently aimed at demoralising the population and exhausting supplies of anti-aircraft ammunition.

Meanwhile, Russian partisan attacks have stepped up their action since late May, which has included a drone raid on Moscow. Ukraine normally denies involvement in such moves although the groups are based in the country.

Although not considered militarily significant, the raids could have a diversionary value that could force Russia to reposition troops inside its own territory.

Western sources said yesterday that munitions, stocks, and troops trained in close combat and fast infantry manoeuvre, were close to being in place at assembly points, allowing Ukraine to launch its counter offensive within weeks.

Military aid
Zelenskiy thanks allies for support at summit in Moldova

Lisa O'Carroll
Chișinău

Volodymyr Zelenskiy said yesterday that he had received "powerful support" from allies attending a summit in Moldova as it emerged F-16 fighter jets could be made available to Ukraine within six months.

Closing the conference of 46 European leaders at a castle just 12 miles from the border, the Ukrainian president spoke of the importance of overturning Russia's air supremacy with a "sky shield" involving a patchwork of Patriot missiles and F-16s.

He also won support from the British prime minister, Rishi Sunak, in his battle for accelerated membership of Nato.

"Why Patriots? Because Patriots have shown the world they can take down any kind of Russian missiles," Zelenskiy said. "Our proposals is to build a sky shield over the European continent. It's important to build it for the whole of Europe, starting with our territory," he told reporters at the European political summit in Chișinău.

After the death of an 11-year-old, her mother and another woman in overnight missile attacks on Kyiv, Zelenskiy said the "protection of our skies" was vital because it would "first and foremost" protect the people of Ukraine and "our children".

Countries including the UK, Denmark, Poland, the Netherlands and Belgium have said they want to help procure F-16s for Ukraine. Last month, the US president, Joe Biden, endorsed training programmes for Ukrainian pilots on F-16s, although such programmes will take months.

Senior sources involved in the F-16 coalition said the jets could be operational in six months' time and be useful during the war or as a stabilising factor in a postwar scenario.

The Dutch and Polish prime ministers made progress on the timeline for delivery of the planes during a roundtable discussion that also included the Danish, Polish, Belgian, Norwegian and Swedish leaders.

"It went very well," said Mateusz Morawiecki, the Polish prime minister. "We agreed to train Ukrainian pilots. Of course the UK does not have F-16s but you have fighter jets and Rishi Sunak agreed to participate in the training exercise for Ukrainian pilots, training also for the logistics around these F-16s, the maintenance, introducing them to Ukrainian aircraft system."

Russia has said providing Ukraine with F-16 jets would be a "colossal risk" for western nations.

The conference in Moldova gave Zelenskiy an opportunity to see most of his main allies in one afternoon after he drove to the summit from an overnight visit to Odesa.

Wedding of crown prince puts an end to Jordan's succession intrigue



Crown Prince Hussein of Jordan and his Saudi bride, Rajwa Alseif, at their wedding in Amman's Zahran Palace yesterday
PHOTOGRAPHS: THE ROYAL HASHEMITE COURT/REUTERS

Oliver Holmes

Jordan's monarchy cemented the role of its crown prince with a glittering wedding yesterday, in a show seeking to buttress the succession and move on from a painful family scandal.

In a ceremony attended by the Prince and Princess of Wales, Crown Prince Hussein married Rajwa Alseif, a Saudi architect linked to her own country's ruling dynasty. The match is seen as boosting Amman's rocky relationship with its more powerful and oil-rich neighbour.

The ceremony was held at the Zahran Palace in Amman. Later, the couple travelled through the capital - accompanied by a royal motorcade of red Land Rovers - to the Al Husseiniya Palace, for a reception and state banquet attended by political figures including US first lady Jill Biden.

Sandhurst graduate Prince Hussein, 28, wore military uniform and hat and sat next to his father, King Abdullah II, before Rajwa, 29, arrived in a vintage Rolls-Royce, dressed in a white gown and diamond tiara.

The country of 11 million people is ostensibly a parliamentary monarchy, but the king holds political powers, including as supreme leader of the armed forces. Western allies overlook democratic issues in Jordan, which is seen as a loyal island of stability in a changing Middle East.

Jordan's royal family suffered a drama in 2021, when the king's half-brother, Prince Hamzah, was accused of conspiring to unseat him with the help of an unidentified foreign government.

The 61-year-old king, one of the world's longest-serving current monarchs, said the act of sedition was the "most painful" ordeal of his reign.

Hamzah, whom Abdullah ousted as heir in 2004 in favour of his son, was taken into custody and signed a pledge of support.

"It's not just a marriage, it's the presentation of the future king of Jordan," said political analyst Amer Sabaileh. "The issue of the crown prince has been closed."

Additional reporting **Associated Press** *and* **Reuters**



The Prince and Princess of Wales greet the newly married couple, who later were driven through the streets of the capital in a royal motorcade of red Land Rovers, below
PHOTOGRAPH: AHMAD ABDO/REUTERS



In brief

United States

Teenagers charged over theft of cherished swan

Three teenagers in New York state have been arrested for allegedly stealing a cherished swan then killing and eating it.

The disappearance on Saturday of the well-known swan Faye and her four cygnets from the village of Manlius, upstate New York, caused concern. Then local authorities revealed she had been abducted and eaten. Her cygnets survived.

Manlius police said three suspects, aged 16 to 18, were arrested on charges of grand larceny and criminal mischief, adding that Faye was given to a suspect's aunt for cooking.
Oliver Milman *New York*

Denmark

Truck driver held after potato spill on bridge

A 57-year-old truck driver has been detained after a large spill of potatoes was found on a bridge linking two Danish islands, police have said. The driver was held on suspicion of causing reckless endangerment to life.

The first spill was reported on the westbound side of the Storebaelt Bridge early yesterday morning. A similar incident happened on the eastbound side a short time later. The Danish public broadcaster, DR, said the potato spills occurred on the same day as a law was passed to tax diesel trucks transporting heavy loads.
Associated Press

Nepal

Sherpa saves climber in Everest 'death zone'

A Malaysian climber had a narrow escape after a Nepali sherpa guide saved him by hauling him down from the summit of Mount Everest in a very rare high-altitude rescue, a government official said.

Gelje Sherpa, 30, was guiding a Chinese client to the 8,849-metre summit on 18 May when he saw the shivering climber clinging to a rope. The area was the "death zone", where temperatures can fall to -30C or lower. Gelje hauled the climber 600 metres down from the Balcony to the South Col over about six hours, where Nima Tashi Sherpa, another guide, joined the rescue. **Reuters** *Kathmandu*



Australian researchers make endometriosis breakthrough

Australian Associated Press

Sydney researchers have made a leap forward that could change the treatment of endometriosis and improve the health of women living with the painful and debilitating disease.

Researchers from Sydney's Royal hospital for women have grown tissue from every known type of endometriosis, observing changes and comparing how they respond to treatments.

It means doctors will be able to vary treatments from different types of endometriosis, determining whether a woman will need fertility treatments.

Professor of obstetrics and gynaecology at Sydney Royal hospital for Women, Jason Abbott, said the development was comparable to those made in the treatment of breast cancer three decades ago.

Endometriosis is a chronic disease with symptoms including abdominal pain, heavy periods, bloating, bleeding from the bladder and bowel, tiredness, anxiety triggered by pain and infertility.

Australian fashion designer Kate Ford has been living with the painful disease for 15 years after being diagnosed as a teenager.

"I was fainting. I was vomiting. I was getting worse and worse," she said. "I just couldn't do anything about it. The only option was to go on the pill when I was 15 and I opted not to do that. I ended up just having to deal with the pain until I was old enough to get the surgery at 17."

Ford said intense pain can strike at any moment. She has endured four invasive laparoscopy surgeries before undergoing fertility treatments that led to the birth of her twins in February last year.

She welcomed the scientific discoveries being made about endometriosis. "But they still don't understand what it is," she said.

Abbott said: "Thirty years ago, we treated all breast cancers the same," he said. "We now know there are many different types of breast cancer and treat them accordingly. By knowing the type of endometriosis, we will be able to predict whether a patient is likely to experience an aggressive, invasive form of the disease and offer treatment to preserve her fertility."

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Apostle of bipartisanship Debt negotiation shows Biden adept at the art of the deal

David Smith
Washington

Sometimes presidencies are about things that don't happen. The US president, Joe Biden, will be breathing a mighty sigh of relief that the economic asteroid hurtling towards Planet Earth turned into a near miss: America is apparently not going to default on his watch.

As a bipartisan deal to raise the $31.4tn (£25.3tn) debt ceiling passed the House of Representatives on Wednesday, Biden could also claim vindication for the underlying theory of his presidency: that in the age of polarisation it takes an apostle of bipartisanship and a 36-year veteran of the Senate to reach across the aisle and make deals with his opponents. Only Biden, the argument goes, can bridge divides that seem unbridgeable in the age of Donald Trump.

Such deals come at a price, of course. Not even the White House claimed that the hard-won budget agreement was a cornucopia of delights for the Democratic base. But it was notable that more Democrats than Republicans voted for the 99-page bill, an unofficial scorecard of who got more of what they wanted. Even progressives who opposed it reserved their contempt for its contents rather than their president.

For sure, there will be plenty of time to analyse and debate how Biden and the Democrats could have played this episode better. They could have raised or abolished the debt limit when they had control of the White House and both chambers of Congress. Senator Tim Kaine of Virginia told the Politico website that if he could have done one thing differently, it would have been "raising the debt limit late last year".

The president may have also been lulled into a false sense of security by the shenanigans around Kevin McCarthy's election as House speaker in January. It took 15 ballots and implied a Republican majority mired in division and dysfunction. But Democrats underestimate Republicans' ability to fall into line at their peril.



Volunteers supply New Yorkers in need with food items in Queens
MAIN PHOTOGRAPH: ANADOLOU AGENCY

> *'You have to have faith in the governing majority … I've always thought we could get here'*
> **Shalanda Young**

McCarthy steered his unwieldy coalition into passing a debt limit bill stuffed with conservative priorities and cuts. If Biden had hoped that moderate Republicans would bow to logic – the debt limit is about spending that Congress has already authorised, not future appropriations – and break ranks, rather than embrace the apocalyptic prospect of default, he had to think again.

The president duly cancelled a trip to Australia and Papua New Guinea to hold talks with McCarthy. He deployed a negotiating team that included Shalanda Young, director of the Office of Management and Budget,who worked such long hours that she admitted to reporters she had run out of clean clothes.

What emerged was a deal that protected Biden's legislative accomplishments including the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law and Inflation Reduction Act, fending off Republican attempts to repeal the latter's green energy incentives. The White House also swept aside Republican proposals to slash funding for education, health, law enforcement and social security.

The argument that "it could have been worse" is hardly an inspiring reelection slogan but the White House would contend that it is realistic in divided government. If anyone channels Biden's bipartisan spirit it is Young, a former staff director of the House appropriations committee who speaks his language of compromise. She insisted: "You have to have some faith in the governing majority … I've always thought we could get here if we let the extreme go away."

Letting the extreme go away, as Young puts it, has typically been a doomed enterprise since Trump's descent on an escalator at Trump Tower in 2015 signalled the descent of the Republican party into a personality cult. The far right Freedom caucus unleashed sound and fury against the deal, inadvertently complimenting Biden on outfoxing McCarthy.

On the left, there was opposition from Pramila Jayapal, Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez and other progressives. They condemned work requirements for food aid programmes for some poor Americans, reduced funding for the Internal Revenue Service that could make life easier for wealthy tax cheats, and the speeding up of the permitting process for a natural gas pipeline in West Virginia.

This could chip away at Biden's long-term support, fuelling a perception that he is pivoting to the centre as 2024 approaches. But again, it could have been worse.

There was no mass revolt against him. Progressives understood that "Maga Republicans" had taken the economy hostage and left Biden with no choice but to negotiate the ransom. The bill now heads to the Senate after a House vote that, as a purple blend of Democrats and Republicans, could not have been more Bidenesque in hitting the sweet spot between left and right. It was Trump who wrote a book titled The Art of the Deal. But it is Biden who continues to exceed low expectations by finding common ground in the disappearing middle.

President falls at graduation event

Joe Biden tripped and fell after handing out the final diploma at a graduation ceremony at the US Air Force Academy yesterday.

He was helped up, and he walked back to his seat unassisted at the event in Colorado, which had lasted about five hours.

Biden, 80, tripped and fell as he turned to his left to shake an officer's hand after making a speech. He remained down for several seconds before an air force officer and two Secret Service agents helped him back to his feet.

Biden then pointed to the place on stage where he had lost his balance. "He's fine," tweeted Ben LaBolt, the White House communications director. "There was a sandbag on stage while he was shaking hands."

Biden has said he will run in the 2024 presidential election, despite some low approval ratings and concerns about his age.

He is already the oldest president, and would be 86 before the end of a second term, nearly a decade older than Ronald Reagan was when he left the White House in 1989. Donald Trump, who could be running against him, is 76. In April, the day after he announced he would run, Biden said: "With regard to age … I guess how old I am. I can't even say the number. It doesn't register with me."



An air force officer and Secret Service agents went to Joe Biden's aid after he fell on stage
PHOTOGRAPH: ANDREW HARNIK/AP

During yesterday's event, Biden thanked graduates for choosing "service over self", and added that they now have the "great privilege" of leading in a world that will only get more confusing. He said they will need the qualities of resilience, creativity, endurance and commitment that they learned at the academy to deal with global challenges. **Staff and agencies**

Trump suggests he should have declassified military document

Hugo Lowell
Washington

Federal prosecutors obtained audio recording of a summer 2021 meeting in which the former US president Donald Trump suggested he should have declassified a military document about Iran he admitted retaining, according to people familiar with the criminal investigation into his retention of national security papers.

The document at issue is understood to be classified as "secret". It is significant because the justice department typically prefers to charge espionage cases involving retention of materials at that level, rather than "top secret" papers that might be too sensitive or "confidential" papers that are too low.

The recording was made at Trump's Bedminster golf club in July 2021 – when the former president met with people helping his former chief of staff Mark Meadows write a book – by his aide Margo Martin, who regularly taped conversations with authors to ensure they accurately recounted his remarks.

For several minutes of the audio recording, the sources said, Trump talks about how he cannot discuss the document because he no longer possesses the sweeping presidential power to declassify given that he is out of office, but suggests that he should have done so when he was still in the White House.

But the previously unreported suggestion that he should have declassified the document presents a potentially perilous moment, as it indicates Trump knew he had retained material that remained sensitive to national security – as well as the limitations on discussing it with unauthorised people. CNN reported that prosecutors had the recording.

Prosecutors in the office of special counsel Jack Smith appear to have obtained the recording around March, as the criminal investigation targeting Trump intensified and Trump aides were subpoenaed to testify before the federal grand jury hearing evidence in the case.

The tape was played to multiple witnesses, including Martin, when she testified in mid March after having her laptop and phones imaged by prosecutors, the sources said. The first time the Trump lawyers learned about the tape was after Martin testified, one of the sources said.

A Trump spokesperson said: "Leaks from radical partisans behind this political persecution are designed to inflame tensions and continue the media's harassment of President Trump and his supporters. It's just more proof that when it comes to President Trump, there are absolutely no depths to which they will not sink as they pursue their witch-hunts."

Qualified but jobless

Chinese graduates facing squeezed labour market

Amy Hawkins
Senior China correspondent

With a master's degree in applied linguistics from one of Australia's top universities, Ingrid Xie did not expect to end up working in a grocery store. But that was where she ended up after graduating from the University of Queensland in July last year.

Xie did her undergraduate degree in China, studying English at Hainan Tropical Ocean University. She went abroad for her master's because she thought that would help her find a better job.

But after working at a Korean supermarket in Brisbane for several months after graduating, in February she decided to return to her home city of Kunming, in the south-west province of Yunnan, to find a job as an English teacher.

Xie soon discovered that "a lot of people studied abroad and want the same thing". Youth unemployment in China hit a record high in April, with 20.4% of 16- to 24-year-old jobseekers unable to find work. Xie is 26 and has not managed to find a job in China since leaving higher education. "It makes me really frustrated," she says.

Nearly 11.6 million students are set to graduate in June, facing a labour market that looks increasingly hostile. The problem of "overeducated" unemployed youths has become so acute people have started comparing themselves to Kong Yiji, a fictional character from a story by Lu Xun, one of the greats of Chinese literature. Kong is a scholar turned beggar who is mocked by the locals at a tavern he drinks at for his pretentious airs.

'A lot of people have studied abroad and want the same thing'

Ingrid Xie
Graduate

State media has criticised these memes, calling them self indulgent. In March a commentary in state media said young people were "unwilling to engage in jobs lower than their expectations".

China's economy is suffering from a mismatch between the jobs available and the qualifications of jobseekers. But in 2021 the government suddenly banned for-profit tutoring, decimating an industry that had previously been worth $150bn. That eased the homework burden for schoolchildren but torpedoed jobs for graduates, including Xie, who had looked at tutoring as a way of getting teaching experience.

In April the government published details of a set of policies designed to stimulate the jobs market, including subsidies for companies hiring unemployed university graduates. It has also set an overall target of creating 12m urban jobs this year, up from 11m for 2022.

Additional research **Chi Hui Lin**



PHOTOGRAPH: AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES

Let loose Children at a nursery in the city of Nanjing celebrate International Children's Day yesterday – the first time China has marked the day since the start of the Covid pandemic.



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Business

Manufacturers blame Brexit for 16 months of declining exports

Larry Elliott
Joanna Partridge

British factories have reported a 16th consecutive month of falling exports, with manufacturers warning obstacles to trade since leaving the EU are undermining business relationships with firms on the continent.

The findings came as the former US treasury secretary Larry Summers said Brexit would be remembered as a "historic economic error" that damaged the British economy and had helped to drive inflation higher.

The manufacturing sector contracted for a 10th consecutive month in May, dragged down by steady falls in exports over the past 16 months, according to the S&P Global/CIPS purchasing managers index (PMI).

Exporters blamed factors including a loss of orders to the US and mainland Europe, and an increasing number of EU clients switching to more local sourcing to avoid the customs barriers, paperwork and delays involved in exporting goods from Britain.

S&P spokesperson Rob Dobson said: "Manufacturers are finding that any potential boost to production from improving supply chains is being completely negated by weak demand, client destocking and a general shift in spending in the UK away from goods to services.

"These factors are also driving a broad decrease in demand from overseas amid reports of lost orders from the US and mainland Europe. The retrenchment in export demand is also being exacerbated by some EU clients switching to more local sourcing to avoid post-Brexit trade complications."

The PMI number fell to a four-month low of 47.1, down from 47.8 in April. A figure above 50 indicates expansion.

Make UK, the manufacturers' lobby group, said exporters lacked government support. "With powerful domestic manufacturing policies in place in the US and the EU, manufacturers can see that the likelihood of much export expansion to the UK's biggest manufactured goods trading partners is dwindling," it said.

The comments underlined criticism from Summers. He singled out Britain's departure from the EU as a factor for higher costs, criticising economic policy as "substantially flawed for some years".

Brexit "reduced the competitiveness of the UK economy, put downwards pressure on the pound and upwards pressure on prices, limited imports of goods and limited in some ways the supply of labour," Summers told BBC Radio 4's Today programme. "All of which contributed to higher inflation."

8.7%
The UK's stubbornly high annual inflation rate, according to the latest official figures last week

Official figures last week showed inflation in the UK remained stubbornly high, at 8.7%, as households come under pressure from the fastest annual rise in food prices since the late 1970s. US consumer price rises have been slowing, dropping to an annual inflation rate of 4.9% in April.

Summers did not spare the Bank of England. He blamed it for higher levels of inflation, saying these were "reinforced by very ill-judged monetary policies that were substantially too expansionary for too long".

Asked if the Bank would be right to keep raising interest rates in order to tackle persistently high inflation, Summers said he believed it was the right path. "There is a lesson from experiences we have all had," he said, comparing it to treatment for illness. "Usually when you are prescribed a course of medication, even if the drugs are not so pleasant themselves, and even if they possibly have some side-effects, it's usually better to take the whole course of medicine the first time it's prescribed than to stop taking the medicine early and wish [sic] a recurrence of the underlying infection."

Co-creator of Sega's Sonic facing jail and fine for alleged insider trading

Oliver Holmes



One of Sonic the Hedgehog's creators is facing possible jail time and a fine of close to £1m for his alleged part in an insider trading scheme, according to a court report by Japanese media.

Yuji Naka, who co-created Sega's blue-spiked mascot, was arrested in November last year over allegations he traded in stock with privileged information for a significant profit.

The 57-year-old game developer was accused of illegally buying tens of thousands of shares in two video game companies based on information that they were soon to announce deals over new games that would bump up their valuation.

Yesterday, the Abema Times reported that prosecutors were seeking two years and six months and fines of ¥172.5m (£990,000), telling the Tokyo district court that Naka "abused his authority to view materials and collect information".

The Abema Times quoted Naka's lawyer as demanding a reduction in the fine and a suspended sentence on the grounds that "information that was extremely unrelated to his duties was mistakenly sent to him and he happened to see it".



▲ *Yuji Naka, 57, one of the creators of Sonic the Hedgehog, is accused of trading with privileged information*
PHOTOGRAPH: KIYOSHI OTA/GETTY IMAGES

Naka was quoted as saying he regretted "undermining the fairness, soundness and credibility of the market … I apologise for that," he said.

Sega released Sonic the Hedgehog at the beginning of the 1990s to compete with Nintendo's Mario brothers. Naka left Sega in 2006, long after Sonic propelled the company to a huge global franchise. After heading up his own studio, Prope, Naka joined Square Enix, which he left in 2021.

In March, the Japanese public broadcaster NHK reported that Naka had "admitted the charges against him". According to the charges, the video game developer bought a total of 130,000 shares in Ateam and Aiming before they announced two partnerships with Square Enix for the mobile games Final Fantasy 7: The First Soldier and Dragon Quest Tact.

It is alleged that he earned a profit on the sale of more than ¥20m.

A judgment is expected to be announced on 7 July.

Retailers lobby government to delay start of packaging waste plan

Richard Partington
Economics correspondent

Britain's biggest retailers and food manufacturers are stepping up lobbying on the government to delay environmental reforms that would force them to pay for the collection and recycling of household packaging waste from next year.

Industry bosses have used Downing Street crisis talks arranged in response to soaring food prices to warn that the plans – due to come into effect in April 2024 – would drive up shopping bills further amid the cost of living crisis.

In meetings called by Rishi Sunak as food prices rose at the fastest annual rate since the 1970s in the past month, supermarket bosses and food manufacturers are understood to have asked ministers to halt the launch of the "extended producer responsibility" (EPR) scheme.

Under the plans, food producers and retailers that sell own-brand products will be obliged to report packaging waste data from January next year and pay the full cost of packaging waste disposal from April. The changes apply to companies with turnover of £1m or more, and the money would be paid to local councils to help fund green bin collections.

Business leaders claim the scheme will cost at least £1.7bn a year, saying the bulk of the cost would be passed on to consumers through higher prices on supermarket shelves.

The government has promised such a scheme for years. However, progress has been slow, with delays blamed on the Covid pandemic, Brexit draining the government's capacity to legislate, and a shifting cast of ministerial appointments.

Karen Betts, the chief executive of the Food and Drink Federation, said: "They should consider delaying the EPR to take that cost out of pricing while inflation remains very high … We're seeing the government rushing through legislation so they're not accused of backsliding on environmental commitments. But the result is you have a very muddled, confused scheme which we think won't work."

Campaigners warned delays would have devastating consequences for the environment, while council leaders said failure to act would mean council tax payers continue to shoulder all recycling costs rather than sharing it with corporations. They argue the scheme will cost less than suggested because it discourages wasteful packaging and promotes recycling.

Musk is lost for words on Twitter after whirlwind China trip

Alex Hern
Technology editor

Followers of Elon Musk didn't know what to expect from his trip to China. Would he speak about Tesla, a company with a large market and manufacturing footprint there? Or SpaceX, with its symbiotic relationship with the US state? Or even Twitter, the social network he bought because "free speech is the bedrock of a functioning democracy"?

The one thing no one expected was silence.

Musk sent his last tweet late on Monday. The uncharacteristic hiatus was broken only yesterday, when he returned to the US and wrote a post congratulating SpaceX for its achievements in human spaceflight.

Any other chief executive could have argued that their two days on the Chinese mainland were a non-stop parade of meetings, tours and dinners, leaving little time for posts on social media. But Musk, who has tweeted more or less every day for the past year, is rarely lost for words.

Twitter, of course, is banned in China, although foreign visitors and net-savvy locals are able to access it using virtual private networks. While in China, the Tesla chief executive met the industry minister, Jin Zhuanglong, prompting a statement from the foreign ministry that Musk was hoping to expand the electric carmaker's business in the country,



▲ *Elon Musk in Beijing this week alongside Tesla executives during his two-day visit to China*
PHOTOGRAPH: TINGSHU WANG/REUTERS

which is its second biggest market. The ministry claimed that Musk had described the two countries' economies as "conjoined twins".

The visit has proved influential among the wider business community. It was reported yesterday that the chief executive of the luxury goods conglomerate LVMH, Bernard Arnault, was also drawing up plans to visit China for the first time since the Covid pandemic. Arnault and Musk have been jostling for position as the world's richest man, with Musk this week overtaking the Frenchman as Tesla stock climbed and LVMH shares dropped.

The importance of China to Tesla has long sat uneasily with Musk's investment in Twitter. Until he took over the social network, it had been known for its strong stance against efforts by the Chinese state to use the service for propaganda purposes abroad. News feeds such as that of the Xinhua agency were tagged as "state-owned media", while the personal accounts of Chinese diplomats and civil servants, using the site under special dispensation, were marked as being "government officials". Those labels were removed as part of Musk's controversial overhaul of the platform's verification process.

Since taking over Twitter, Musk has not directly responded to the criticism of conflicts of interest. But pressure over Twitter's relationship with foreign governments has sparked a fiery response.

After the journalist Matt Yglesias pointed out that Twitter chose to comply with Turkish government requests to take down content in the wake of the national election, in apparent contrast to Musk's claim to be a "free-speech absolutist", Musk replied, calling him an "insufferable numbskull". It was his last Twitter exchange before he arrived in China.

New 9% deal for savers on back of rising base rate

Rupert Jones

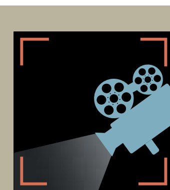
A new savings account has been launched that pays an inflation-beating 9% interest – hours after a rival institution unveiled an account paying 7.5%.

The Bank of England's 12 interest rate rises in a row have spelled pain for millions of people with existing mortgages, but the flip side is that savers are being offered some of the highest rates for more than a decade.

However, many of the deals offering the highest rates have strings attached. Saffron building society's 9% rate is only available to people who have been members of the Essex-based institution for a year or more and the most that can be paid in per month is £50. The interest will be paid when it matures after 12 months.

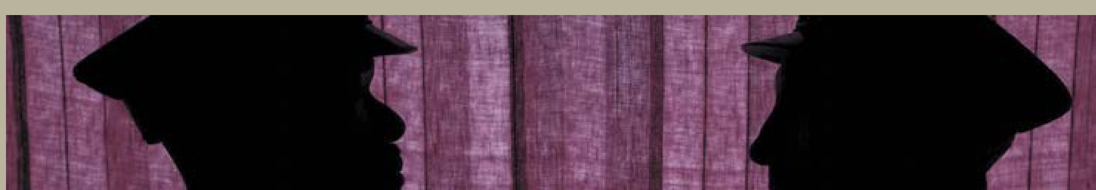
Skipton building society's account pays 7.5% and is exclusively available to the Skipton's 1.1 million members who joined on or before 31 May this year. It allows people to save up to £3,000 a year.

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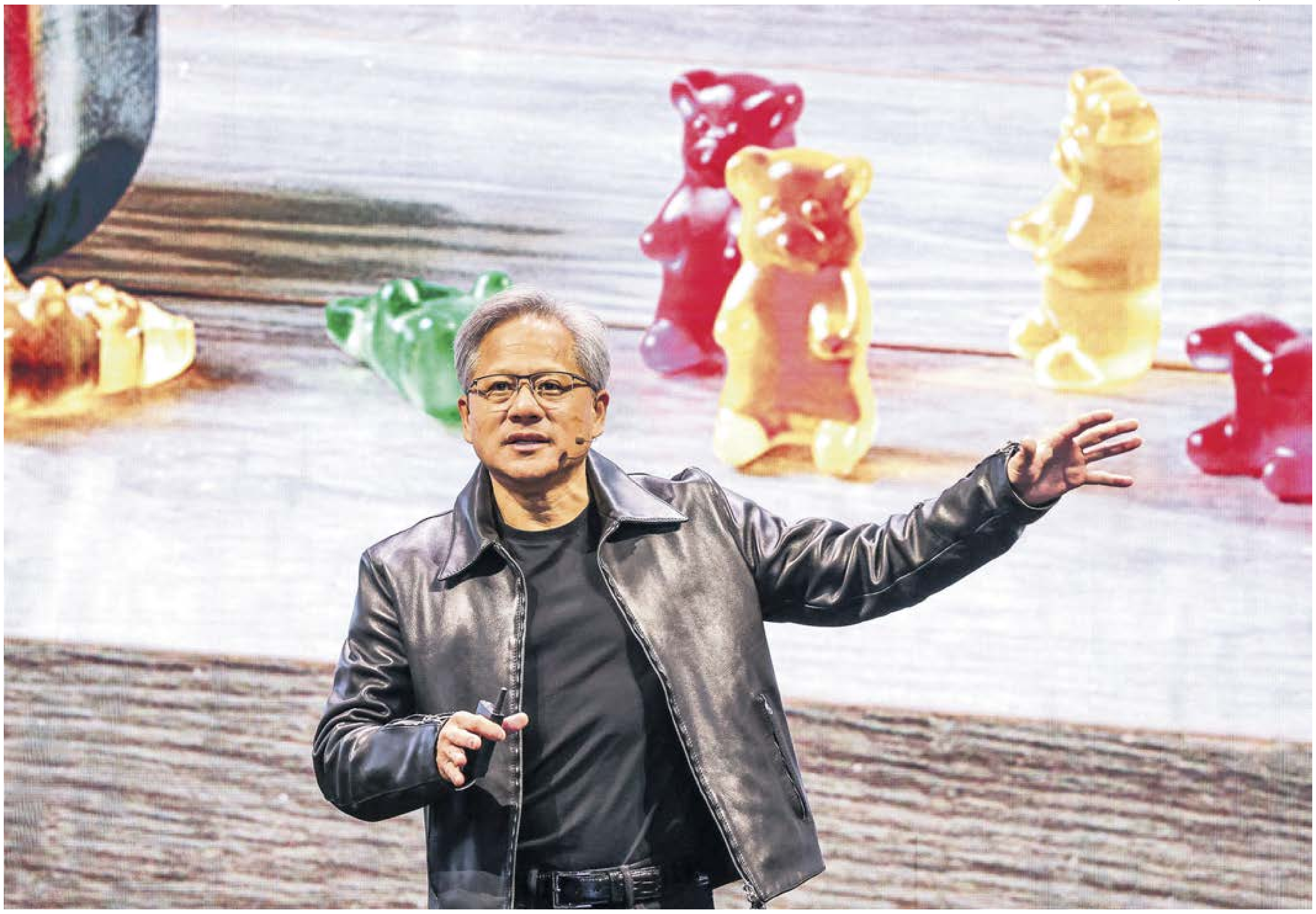




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▼ *Jensen Huang, chief executive and co-founder of Nvidia, unveils AI products in Taiwan this week*
PHOTOGRAPH: I-HWA CHENG/BLOOMBERG/GETTY

Nvidia chips with everything

Faith in AI pays off as designer becomes 'the only game in town'

Johana Bhuiyan
Alex Hern

Nvidia employs tens of thousands of people, but the chip designer's success is all about agility. It began with circuits for video games 30 years ago, before pivoting to automated cars, crypto and most recently artificial intelligence. On Tuesday, that ability to change tack paid off in spectacular fashion, when the hype around AI propelled Nvidia's stock market valuation to $1tn.

Since launching in 1993, America's now fifth-largest company has become a major and in some cases dominant player in several industries. But no development has raised its profile - and its potential windfall - as much as the current excitement around generative AI.

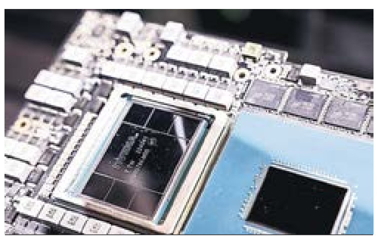
It may soon have to pivot again, however, to secure its supply chain. The company's close partnership with Taiwanese chipmaker TSMC has led to rumbles of concern that it might be exposed to geopolitical risk factors. Yesterday, Nvidia's chief executive and co-founder, Jensen Huang, brushed off those fears. "When I was here, in all of our supply chain discussions, we feel perfectly safe," he said, speaking from an event in Taipei where he praised TSMC for its "immense capacity and incredible agility".

Huang, who is Taiwan-born and US-raised, said TSMC's geographic diversification was an "excellent strategy", which played into Nvidia's own "diversity and redundancy strategy".

As Nvidia's market cap has grown, so has Huang's prominence. He spent the pandemic giving keynote presentations from his own kitchen, and in August 2021, Nvidia revealed that one such presentation had not in fact featured the chief executive at all - instead, it starred an AI clone of him, digitised and inserted into a VR kitchen set.

While competing chipmakers such as Intel, Micron Technology and Advanced Micro Devices (AMD) have spent years battling for market share in spaces with existing demand, such as powering data centres, Nvidia has invested in building and developing chips that can power AI. The strategy means the company now has the upper hand, said Dan Ives, managing director at investment bank Wedbush Securities: "In terms of scale, scope and the ability to integrate the data, Nvidia is essentially the only game in town."

To build ChatGPT, OpenAI relied on thousands of Nvidia chips, according to Reuters. Elon Musk, who has a history of partnering with Nvidia to power Teslas, has also acquired Nvidia chips for his own AI startup, according to the Financial Times. In the May earnings call that sparked Wall Street's enthusiasm for the company, Huang said the firm expected to bring in $11bn (£8.8bn) in revenue in the next quarter - $4bn more than Wall Street expected the chipmaker to make.



$11bn
Nvidia's revenue forecast for the next quarter, driven by the chip designer's AI technology, above

Industry experts think Nvidia will see its profits continue for quite a while. "AMD, Micron and [Taiwan Semiconductor Manufacturing Company] will clearly be beneficiaries but Nvidia built the house," Ives said. "Now everyone's coming because the use cases for generative AI because of ChatGPT has caused a tidal wave of demand for these chips. The demand is on the enterprise and on the consumer side, and, down the road, autonomous self-driving."

Geir Lode, head of global equities at the investment manager Federated Hermes, said: "Teaching computers to become intelligent requires extremely powerful processing capacity.

"In 2021, computer gaming drove revenues and earnings higher. Now artificial intelligence is the next supercharged growth area, and we expect this is just the beginning. We know growth will be there, but valuations can be hard to justify."

The company started out designing graphics processing units for video games - a space it has commanded for years - and over time expanded by repurposing those chips to help power automated driving systems, such as those in Tesla vehicles, as well as data centres. Today, Nvidia's chips power many of the systems households around the world use every day.

Although Nvidia is a big name in the industries it operates in, many consumers may be less familiar with it. That's partly by design. It operates in the background and

> *'Many in the chip world were sceptical around AI but Nvidia jumped in. They built it and were waiting for others to come'*
>
> **Dan Ives**
> *Investment banker*

allows the company that owns the actual product that people purchase or interact with to shine. Still, every few years, excitement around certain technologies thrusts it into the spotlight. At times, that's hurt it: mass demand for Nvidia chips from crypto miners, for instance, led the company to lower its revenue projections to $100m for the first quarter of 2020 due to a chip shortage and higher prices.

Nvidia's chief technology officer told the Guardian in March that it had never been committed to the sector. "They bought a lot of stuff, and then eventually it collapsed, because it doesn't bring anything useful for society," Michael Kagan said. "I never believed that [crypto] is something that will do something good for humanity."

But in the case of AI, Nvidia seems to feel differently. On the earnings call, its chief financial officer, Colette Kress, said the company had already started to buy a supply of chips in preparation for continued spikes in demand in the second half of the year.

Although Ives expects other companies to build these chips over time, he says it will probably be several years before they are able to match the scale and scope that Nvidia has today. "I think the first phase is that Nvidia is going to be the foundation of AI, but in the next two to three years, I wouldn't be surprised if Apple, Google and potentially others don't try to build their own chips," he said.

"Others have tried to build and fend off Nvidia but there have been many endeavours with little results," Ives continued. "I think AMD is the closest with its relationship with Microsoft." But Huang and Nvidia have been so many years ahead of any other chip player, Ives said, that it makes it challenging for others to catch up. "Many in the chip world were sceptical around AI, whereas Nvidia jumped into the deep end of the pool - they built it and they were waiting for others to come."

If players such as Google and Apple begin building and selling chips to power AI systems, one advantage Nvidia has is its existing partnerships with companies across industries. Unlike Google and Apple, Nvidia has established trust as a supplier that is not interested in taking over or controlling the consumer interface.

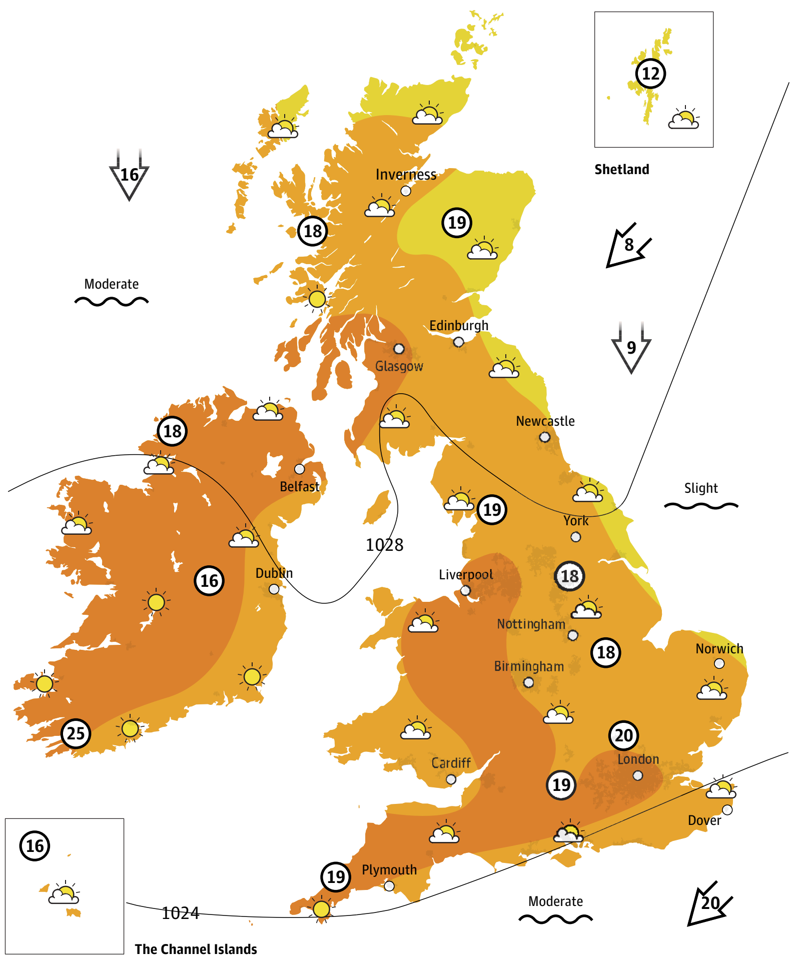
Nvidia is the Switzerland of AI, Ives said. "There's less trust issues from the software companies because they've always stayed a chip player." As for the big tech stalwarts? "They're the big bad wolf - you don't want their tentacles in your enterprise."

Weather
Friday 2 June 2023

UK and Ireland Noon today

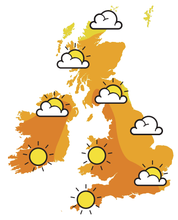
Sunny · Mist · Fog · Sunny intervals · Hazy · Mostly cloudy · Overcast/dull · Sunny showers · Sunny and heavy showers · Light showers · Rain · Sleet · Light snow · Snow showers · Heavy snow · Ice · Thundery rain · Thundery showers · Temperature, ºC · Wind speed, mph · Windy

35C, 30, 25, 20, 15, 10, 5, 0, -5, -10, -15, -20

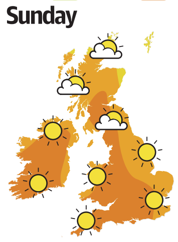


Forecast

Low 6 High 21
Tomorrow



Low 8 High 21
Sunday



Carbon count

Daily atmospheric CO_2 readings from Mauna Loa, Hawaii (ppm):

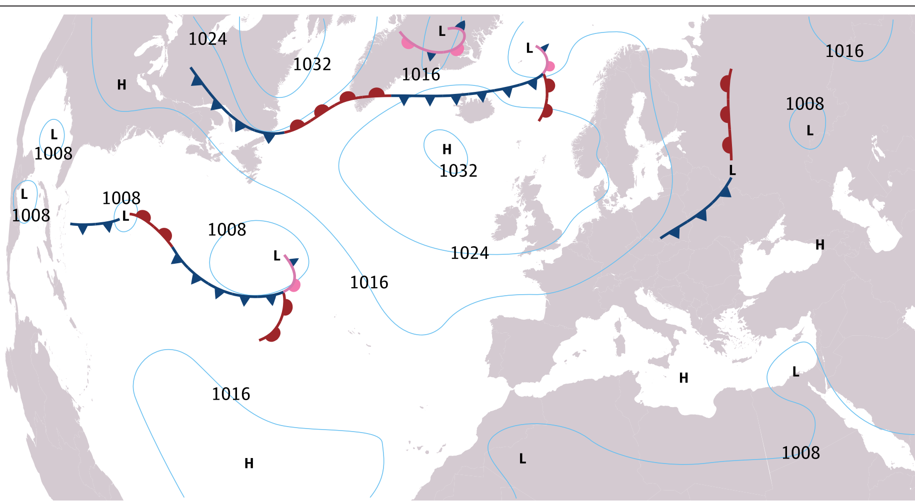
Latest	
30 May 2023	424.66
Weekly average	
21 May 2023	423.91
01 Jun 2022	421.31
01 Jun 2013	400.25
Pre-industrial base	280
Safe level	350

Source: NOAA-ESRL

Around the UK

	Lows and highs	Precipitation	Air pollution
London	8 – 20	0%	Low
Manchester	6 – 20	0%	Low
Edinburgh	7 – 16	0%	Low
Belfast	9 – 20	0%	Low
Birmingham	7 – 19	0%	Low
Brighton	8 – 18	0%	Low
Bristol	8 – 20	0%	Low
Cardiff	8 – 19	0%	Low
Newcastle	5 – 16	0%	Low
Penzance	11 – 17	0%	Low

Atlantic front



Cold front
Warm front
Occluded front
Trough

High tides

Source: © Crown Copyright. All rights reserved. Times are local UK times

Aberdeen	**0045**	3.8m	**1257**	3.9m
Avonmouth	**0631**	11.8m	**1858**	12.1m
Barrow	**1054**	8.4m	**2317**	8.6m
Belfast	**1031**	3.3m	**2255**	3.2m
Cobh	**0442**	3.7m	**1707**	3.8m
Cromer	**0559**	4.5m	**1804**	4.6m
Dover	**1028**	6.1m	**2243**	6.3m
Dublin	**1104**	3.8m	**2318**	3.8m
Galway	**0433**	4.6m	**1651**	4.8m
Greenock	**--**	--	**1141**	3.2m
Harwich	**1115**	3.7m	**2331**	3.7m
Holyhead	**0946**	5.1m	**2211**	5.2m
Hull	**0543**	6.8m	**1755**	6.8m
Leith	**0155**	5.0m	**1416**	5.1m
Liverpool	**1030**	8.5m	**2255**	8.7m
London Bridge	**0058**	6.5m	**1322**	6.5m
Lossiemouth	**1117**	3.7m	**2346**	3.8m
Milford Haven	**0531**	6.3m	**1755**	6.4m
Newquay	**0425**	6.2m	**1648**	6.4m
North Shields	**0249**	4.5m	**1500**	4.6m
Oban	**0510**	3.6m	**1737**	3.6m
Penzance	**0356**	5.0m	**1620**	5.1m
Plymouth	**0503**	4.9m	**1731**	5.0m
Portsmouth	**1055**	4.3m	**2314**	4.5m
Southport	**0958**	8.2m	**2223**	8.4m
Stornoway	**0612**	4.3m	**1842**	4.4m
Weymouth	**0516**	1.0m	**1744**	1.1m
Whitby	**0322**	5.0m	**1534**	5.1m
Wick	**1046**	3.1m	**2314**	3.2m
Workington	**1055**	7.5m	**2319**	7.7m

Sun & Moon



Sun rises	0448
Sun sets	2108
Moon rises	1934
Moon sets	0334
Full Moon	4 June

Forecasts and graphics provided by **AccuWeather** ©2023

Lighting up

Belfast	2151 to 0454
Birm'ham	2120 to 0449
Brighton	2106 to 0451
Bristol	2119 to 0459
Carlisle	2139 to 0439
Cork	2144 to 0519
Dublin	2144 to 0502
Glasgow	2152 to 0439
Harlech	2132 to 0456
Inverness	2203 to 0425
London	2108 to 0447
M'chester	2128 to 0446
Newcastle	2136 to 0434
Norwich	2110 to 0436
Penzance	2124 to 0516

Pollutionwatch

Exposure to air pollution harms our health and reducing air pollution saves money. These were the two main messages from last month's conference of air pollution scientists in Brussels.

About 412,000 people die early each year from particle pollution alone across the 27 EU member states. Air pollution is also a factor in many of our chronic diseases; it harms our health from before birth, through childhood and into old age.

The new EU proposals fall short of adopting the World Health Organization guidelines but they would reduce legal limits for particle pollution by 60%, and for nitrogen dioxide by 50%, by 2030.

Objectors cite costs but the benefits from reducing the health burden from air pollution are so high that these almost always outweigh the investment.

The government's air pollution targets for England have the same target for particle pollution, but aim to attain this 10 years after the EU. They do not include new limits for nitrogen dioxide. The estimated benefit is between five and six times greater than the investment. For the EU's proposal, the projected benefit is at least 10 times greater than the cost and could be as much as 35 times. **Gary Fuller**

Around the world

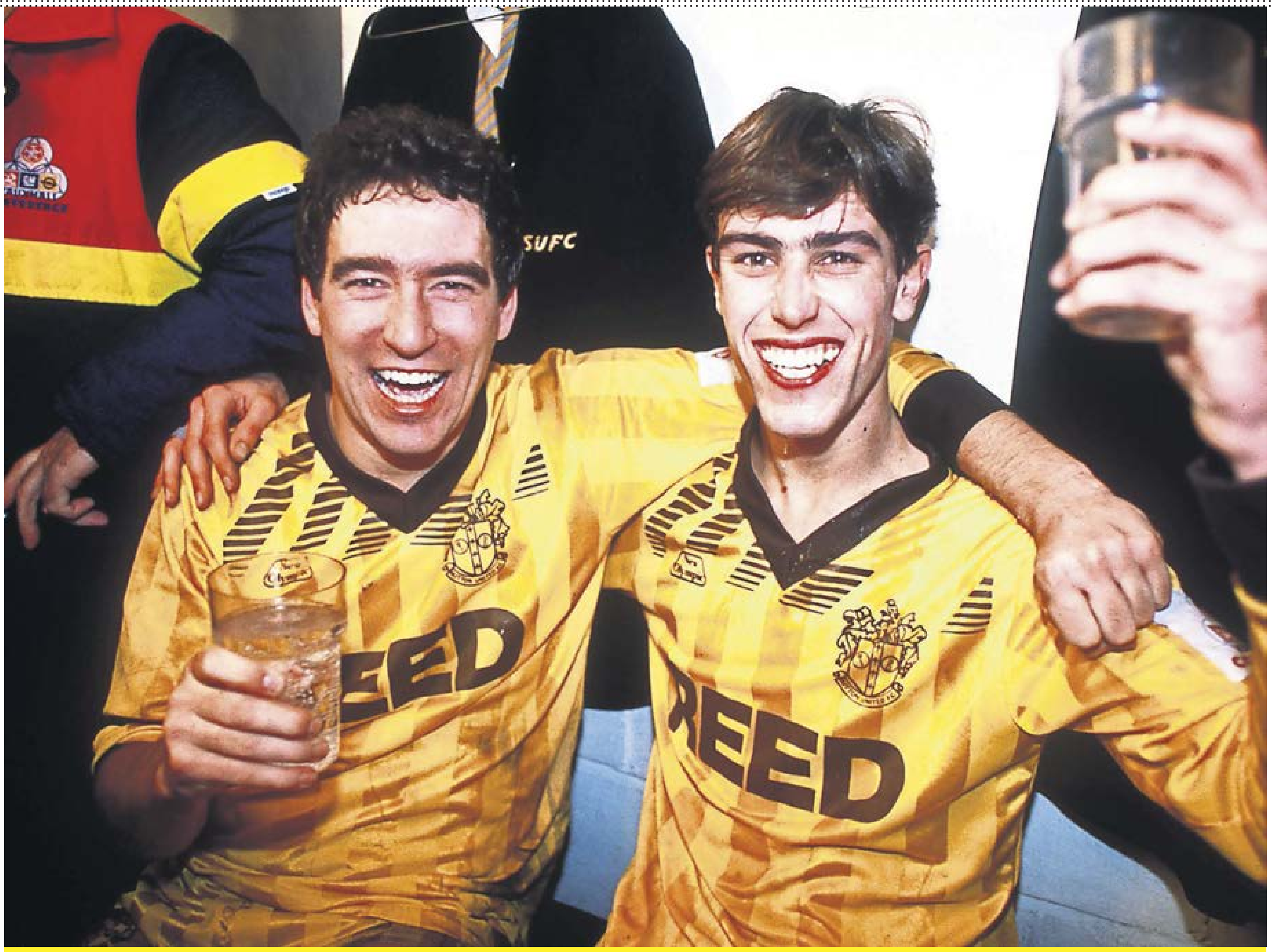
Algiers	24	Lisbon	25
Ams'dam	18	Madrid	23
Athens	25	Malaga	23
Auckland	17	Melb'rne	15
B Aires	21	Mexico C	30
Bangkok	36	Miami	30
Barcelona	23	Milan	28
Basra	42	Mombasa	29
Beijing	32	Moscow	23
Berlin	20	Mumbai	33
Bermuda	24	N Orleans	32
Brussels	20	Nairobi	24
Budapest	28	New Delhi	33
C'hagen	17	New York	32
Cairo	41	Oslo	19
Cape Town	18	Paris	22
Chicago	32	Perth	18
Corfu	28	Prague	21
Dakar	28	Reykjavik	11
Dhaka	38	Rio de J	23
Dublin	16	Rome	25
Florence	27	Shanghai	34
Gibraltar	22	Singapore	32
H Kong	33	Stockh'm	14
Harare	26	Strasb'g	26
Helsinki	10	Sydney	21
Istanbul	26	Tel Aviv	37
Jo'burg	19	Tenerife	27
K Lumpur	33	Tokyo	23
K'mandu	33	Toronto	30
Kabul	28	Vancouv'r	19
Kingston	30	Vienna	26
Kolkata	40	Warsaw	17
L Angeles	21	Wash'ton	33
Lagos	29	Well'ton	17
Lima	23	Zurich	26

Football
Chelsea reject Brighton's £30m bid for Colwill
Page 37 →

Tennis
Raducanu splits with yet another coach amid layoff
Page 38 →



Sport



▲ *Sutton United's giantkilling of Coventry in 1989 is an example of what made the FA Cup so special all those years ago*
ALLSPORT UK

Vanishing act

FA Cup final offers intrigue but true magic belongs to its minnows

Max Rushden



Has the FA Cup lost something? You know, something intangible. Something that made it more special all those years ago. What's the word? It's "Tada", it's "Abracadabra", it's "Piff Paff Puff" … it's magic perhaps - yes that's it. Remember when it was magic. Ricky Villa, Norman Whiteside, the Crazy Gang, the cream suits. Bert Millichip, velvet bags, Sutton United, Tim Buzaglo, Mickey Thomas, Ronnie Radford.

How could we get it back? Did Des Lynam remember to cryogenically freeze the legendary Gerald Sinstadt before he retired? Could we reanimate him and get him on the Manchester United coach at 8am? Could we all give our TVs away so only one house on the street has one and we sit around that Leicester fan who found a transistor radio for the last day of the season? Get Mike Ingham and Alan Green on a crackly landline.

It is possible that the FA Cup hasn't lost its magic at all, it's just that you are no longer a child. You are a bit more aware of the less appealing aspects of the game. Maybe the column "has the FA Cup lost its magic?" has lost its magic. Arguably it was peak magic for children of the 1980s for whom football became their sole interest in the middle of the European ban. Before and after, well there were/are other big shiny things that lay claim to the same thing - although that feels a stretch writing after the six-week Europa League final.

The reality is slightly more prosaic. The FA Cup is magic if you win it. It's magic if you're a lower-league club who get somewhere. And it isn't otherwise.

This final is fascinating. The plucky minnows of Manchester United v the giant petrostate Pep-oiled machine of Manchester City. Erik ten Hag was slightly disingenuous about United's underinvestment in January. We know what you did last summer. You spent about £200m. Even still - top four and a trophy is some turnaround from those opening two defeats by Brighton and Brentford.

Much like for both Milan sides in the Champions League semi-final, this FA Cup final feels less about winning and more about not losing - for United especially. For them it's about stopping City "doing that thing we did". United fans have been pretty quiet about it over the last 24 years, but to be one of two teams left who could stop their rivals repeating the treble is possibly the ultimate motivation.

Twenty-four years of bragging rights - now trickier working from home; a gentle nod on a Zoom call before the meeting starts: "YOU'RE ON MUTE COLIN" - ah, the moment's gone. City are so close. It's hard to know who is under more pressure.

United are obviously underdogs. City's run to the title was unstoppable and that first 45 minutes against Real Madrid breathtaking. It was magical, if you divorce the football from where the money comes from which is increasingly difficult. And once you've peered behind the curtain it's hard to let it drop back down.

You can let football be the escape we all want it to be, just accept that hypocrisy is everywhere, and give yourself a pass. For City, don't talk about the charges laid down by the same man who handed them their Premier League medals, nor Abu Dhabi's record - according to Amnesty - on arbitrary detention, LGBTQ+ rights and torture. Just where are the benevolent billionaires?

A lot of people don't care. Many journalists and broadcasters ignore it or allude to it once and think their job is done. Gay allies taking money from Qatar to promote the World Cup. "Today I feel gay." Today I care about other gay people. Sorry, how much? OK, I care about my LGBTQ+ brothers and sisters but only within the nearest 4,000 miles.

To divorce the two seems the only way. Do you still nostalgically remember Gordon the Gopher, even after last week? I want to delight in Erling Haaland's pure massiveness. And of course similarly powerless United fans could be in the same predicament pretty soon.

> *You can let football be the escape we all want it to be, just accept that hypocrisy is everywhere, and give yourself a pass*

And it's not just them. Don't mention the player on bail amid allegations of rapes bossing the [redacted] for [redacted] helping them to [redacted] place. Don't keep highlighting corruption or gambling addiction. Forget the racism and the abuse of referees. Don't mention the continuing sexist abuse female presenters and pundits receive. It's a long, depressing list.

And here we are, trying to find the magic within this landscape. Luton giving hope to everyone with those players who've worked their way up the pyramid. The all-new Roy Hodgson and his gung-ho football. Gary O'Neil proving us all wrong. The Sheffield Wednesday comeback. That World Cup final. The fans on the pitch at the Abbey. The outpouring of love for the retiring Jeff Stelling. And beyond that the real magic: the charity heroes such as Stephanie Moore, the countless volunteers keeping grassroots football alive, the people manning the food banks.

Grimsby gave us magic this year in the FA Cup. As for the final, City should win. They should win the treble. But you never know, and even for a season this long - that's the thing that keeps us coming back, even if a mini-retirement might be a good thing. Euro 2024 qualifiers in a couple of weeks? It never ends.

All the way to Wembley
United and City fans travel from far and wide for Manc-Manc showdown Page 9 →

'We know we can beat City ... but United need a great performance'



Raphaël Varane takes confidence from United's 2-1 victory over City in January
MICHAEL REGAN/GETTY IMAGES

'Every game is a challenge and I like to challenge myself. It is important to believe'

Raphaël Varane insists Manchester United have nothing to fear against City in Wembley showpiece

Jamie Jackson

In a gleaming white Manchester United training suit Raphaël Varane emanates the kind of pre-FA Cup final cool that will be a boon to teammates when trying to claim a second trophy of the season and halt Manchester City's tilt at the treble in tomorrow's Wembley showpiece.

Not that the France World Cup winner and four-time Champions League victor with Real Madrid is characterising taking on Pep Guardiola's gilded team in any way that might allow his quotes to be dressing-room motivation fodder.

On a sun-drenched day at United's Carrington base, Varane says: "We want to win and that's the only objective we have. We don't try to stop them, we want to win for the club."

The 30-year-old is far more bullish when a particular F-word is put to him regarding what he and the rest of Erik ten Hag's players may feel when attempting a repeat of January's derby victory at Old Trafford.

"Fear? No. Why?" says Varane. "Every game is a challenge and I like to challenge myself, we like to challenge other teams too as a group. The most important is to believe. It doesn't matter if it is a team in good or bad form, the challenge is in front of us and we have to accept it and do our best to win."

Varane is clear that he and other senior players, including Bruno Fernandes, Casemiro, David de Gea, Marcus Rashford and Luke Shaw, can lead the charge against Erling Haaland, Kevin De Bruyne, Jack Grealish et al.

"Pressure is something we are used to playing with and we need pressure to be at our top," he says. "It's not that kind of pressure that limits you. When the pressure is higher I'm more talking and shouting on the pitch - more connected. When you are free you run faster" - he laughs - "so bigger pressure means more you can give."

In January, goals from Fernandes and Rashford secured a comeback victory for United at Old Trafford after Grealish's opener. Varane relished a win that was the perfect riposte to October's 6-3 humiliation at the Etihad Stadium.



◀ *Raphaël Varane trains with his Manchester United teammates at Carrington in preparation for the FA Cup final*
ASH DONELON/MANCHESTER UNITED/GETTY IMAGES

He says of that win: "When something looks impossible, it's when I feel: 'OK [let's try].' That expectation to do something impossible, what looks impossible. When the challenge is big I feel more motivation and that came then.

"As a team we defended very well. City is a team that creates the most chances in a game, and that game in the first half they were very good. So we have to do this performance to win the Cup and if we have one chance we have to score. We have to be efficient."

Varane, who had one season in the first team at Lens before Real signed him in summer 2011, has become more streamlined himself as a smoothly calm presence in the United backline.

"I can read the game better now and anticipate actions much more," he says. "I am sprinting less on the pitch. I read [the situation] before to be in a good position. A big part of my game, you can't see on TV, I think: it's about 2 metres on the right and 2 metres on the left. I think I am more in a good position.

"The evolution of my game is interesting. I make less tackles and less sprints so that means I am using the positioning very well. That's one of my strengths."

This allows Varane to help teammates. "I have more time to connect with the players around me, to be in good positions," he adds. "As a team as well when sometimes we go for pressing but are not ready, I can help them to choose the right moment to slow down or to speed up. So I feel more connected with the game, the pace of it."

Haaland scored a blistering hat-trick in the 6-3 defeat but was kept muted in the return. Varane says: "He's a very good player, we all know that, but the danger from City is everywhere. They are very complete. They can score from set plays, a possession game and from a transition game. We know we have to stop them collectively as a group."

Varane is keenly aware of how Haaland and De Bruyne can link up. "That kind of pass is complicated to defend, so we try to cut that connection. We try to stop them earlier and not at the end because sometimes it's too late. We know we have to be strong. That was part of the plan [in the 2-1] because they have a lot of connections and can change systems and have a different approach to games. It's one of the things we have to work on.

"We know we are able to beat any team. We showed that this season. We know we can beat them but we know they are good. We have to learn from the games we played against them and need a great performance, be consistent for 90 minutes, because we know everything can change in a few seconds."

In February, United beat Newcastle 2-0 at Wembley to win the Carabao Cup. Varane hopes for a second triumph at the home of the English game. "The FA Cup is huge here in England, I have a big respect for the fans, so I know how important this competition - this game - is to them," he says. "When it's a final, you want to win it."

‘Thinking beyond the Cup final will kill us’

Rúben Dias says Manchester City must remain focused on United and not let minds wander to thoughts of treble

Jamie Jackson

Rúben Dias is the leader of Manchester City’s defence, and Pep Guardiola loves to cite the 26-year-old as the model footballer owing to his drive to burnish his elite talent via his uber-professionalism. In a team built to chase perfection this pursuit of excellence makes Dias one of Guardiola’s captains and is an inherent quality of a centre-back who was voted the Football Writers’ Association’s player of the year in 2020-21, his first season at City.

“I guess I’ve always been like this, it’s the way I believe I should conduct myself and it’s the way that makes sense to me,” says Dias of percentage gains. “Definitely. Football is details and the more details you can put together the better. This is the way that makes my life have more sense and I follow through with it.

“Obviously you couldn’t be in this team any other way. Although all of us have done great things, the demand is always very high. It starts mainly from the manager. No matter what we do, we’ll be asked for more. You have the personal demand of everyone as well. For us to be at the top this long is because everyone has it in himself.”

In tomorrow’s FA Cup final Dias is expected to line up against Marcus Rashford, who in Anthony Martial’s injury-enforced absence may lead Manchester United’s front line. Dias, though, refuses to personalise the contest.

“United have many threats and we know them well,” he says. “We know who can be dangerous and how they can be dangerous. United are dangerous because of the team they are and not any individual.”

If the champions defeat their crosstown rivals, the second leg of a possible treble will be completed. Given how close City are to joining United’s 1999 vintage as immortals, Dias’s sober view of their three-peat title and the challenge at Wembley, and against Internazionale in the Champions League final a week tomorrow, is understandable.

“We’ve not done anything yet,” he says. “We definitely know what we’re going for and we really want it. But we know if we start to think too far ahead it will kill us. Our heads are on training. Little by little, we think. Just think and do it.”

Guardiola, for a man whose management style can be viewed as distant by his players, has mastered the high-wire act of retaining the edge required from multimillionaire charges to compete still, seven years into his reign, as if their futures are at risk. Part of this is an understanding of dressing room chemistry, which means the 52-year-old allows personalities to breathe.

An example: Jack Grealish and Erling Haaland teasing Dias’s gym-rat persona in their “The Biggest Fraud” award for the Portuguese’s “four-times a-day” workouts that, as a viral video clip shows, did not stop the Norwegian from brushing him aside when playing for Borussia Dortmund against City in 2021. Dias concurs: “It’s important to have this team spirit. We have to be together all year and the better we get along, the better for the team. It’s good to have good people besides the good players we have.”

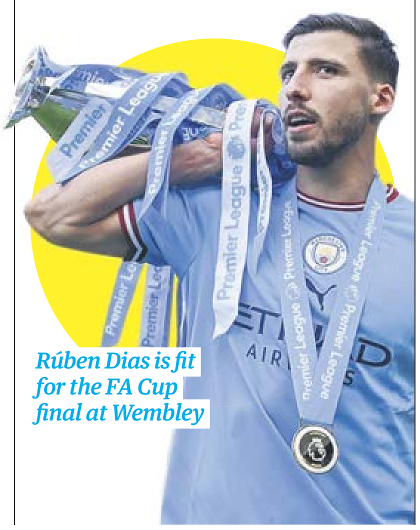
Haaland has ransacked 52 goals in 49 games in a memorable campaign. Dias may be relieved that the heavy schedule dictates he does not mark him often in drills.

“We don’t train that much, because we play every three days,” says Dias. “Training isn’t the most intense because we need to rest. But overall, yes, if you play against the best in training like Erling then you’re working yourself more for whatever you’re up against.”

United finished third, a yawning 14 points behind City’s 89. The league derby meetings this season brought one win each.

“Those points of reference will be important but it’s a new game, and a final is always different,” Dias says. “The details make the difference, they are the things that matter. It’s about being who we are. We’ve played them, we know their strong points and weak points. In the end it’ll be about being the very best version of ourselves. Our best chance of beating United is just by being Manchester City. It’ll be a tight game. It’s a special competition for all of us and a special competition for the country. It’s one of the biggest. The moment you start losing that fire, that spice for winning trophies then you’re not doing anything at this club. My passion is still there.”

The double would be a great achievement, he says, but not enough. “We’ll celebrate it if we do and then think about what is coming because we are still not finished.”



Rúben Dias is fit for the FA Cup final at Wembley

Evra calls on sport to tackle abuse of children

Paul MacInnes

Patrice Evra has criticised a culture of “toxic masculinity” in men’s football as he called on sporting institutions to confront the endemic violence experienced by athletes at all levels.

The former Manchester United and France captain is a survivor of sexual abuse and was speaking at a gathering of European politicians and sporting bodies on the problem of violence - sexual, physical and psychological - in sport.

“When you get abused, for whatever reason, you don’t talk,” Evra told a meeting of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (Pace) in London. “It’s not easy to talk because you feel guilty, you feel shame about yourself and also you don’t know if people will believe you.

“That’s why it’s difficult to talk. Especially in football where there is such toxic masculinity. If a player came and said: ‘This happened to me,’ you don’t want to play with that player. Even crying in football is not allowed. If I had spoken out when I was a player I don’t think I would have been treated with the same respect.



Patrice Evra explained how difficult it had been to cope with sexual abuse

“I was sexually abused at the age of 13 by my headteacher. Something I survived, but at what price? It cost me a lot. It was only when I was 38 that I was able to tell my story, to my wife. One in two children will experience some kind of violence in their childhood. It might happen in a football team, in school or out of school. But we never talk. We need to break the taboo [around] talking about child sexual abuse.”

Experts spoke of the need to join the dots between all forms of violence perpetrated against children and young athletes. There is no global framework for reporting and monitoring abuse, and sporting bodies stated the need for effective interaction between local governing bodies, political institutions and judiciaries.

Joyce Cook, who was responsible for creating a safeguarding and child protection department within Fifa, is working from her role as a special adviser to Gianni Infantino, the president of football’s world governing body, to create a multisport safeguarding organisation. She told Pace there was “evidence of perpetrators jumping from sport to sport” and that “it’s not an option, not to act”.

The International Olympic Committee’s working group on the prevention of harassment and abuse in sport is due to report its initial findings in two weeks, with a $10m (£8m) budget to start to tackle the problem. But the IOC’s sports director, Kit McConnell, said the challenge needed to be approached from first principles, with national and international solutions. “Do we know what works? Not entirely,” he said.

Chelsea reject bid for Colwill as Mount tops exit list

Jacob Steinberg
Andy Hunter

Chelsea have rejected a £30m bid from Brighton for Levi Colwill and are determined not to sell the centre-back. Colwill has just returned from an impressive season on loan at Brighton, who are not the only team tracking him. Chelsea are under pressure to sell players but value the England Under-21s international highly and want him as part of Mauricio Pochettino’s squad.

Chelsea’s preference is for Colwill, one of their best academy talents, to sign a long-term contract. The 20-year-old’s deal expires in 2026. An option to extend by a year depends on Colwill playing a certain number of games. Colwill’s view on his future is likely to depend on whether he can see a pathway into Chelsea’s first team. He faces competition from another left-sided centre-back in Benoît Badiashile, who joined from Monaco in January. The club see no problem with defying convention and playing two left-footed centre-backs in the same team.



▲ *Chelsea want to keep Levi Colwill but many other players will be sold*

It is likely that Pochettino will give Colwill a chance to show he can compete with Badiashile, Thiago Silva, Kalidou Koulibaly, Trevoh Chalobah and Wesley Fofana. Chalobah and Koulibaly could leave.

Chelsea, who retain an interest in the Brighton midfielder Moisés Caicedo, could be forced into difficult decisions if they struggle to attract offers for fringe players.

Mateo Kovacic has been given permission to talk to Manchester City and Mason Mount has agreed terms with Manchester United, who still need to settle on a fee with Chelsea for the midfielder. Milan want Ruben Loftus-Cheek, Conor Gallagher is attracting interest and Callum Hudson-Odoi will be allowed to leave.

Meanwhile, Conor Coady has left Everton after the club decided not to sign the England international on a permanent basis. Everton had an option to sign the defender for £4.5m as part of his season-long loan from Wolves and will look elsewhere for central defenders.

The 30-year-old played a vital role in preserving the club’s Premier League status on the final day against Bournemouth. He was a regular fixture under Frank Lampard but lost his place to Michael Keane shortly after the arrival of Sean Dyche.

The left-back Rúben Vinagre has returned to Sporting after an unsuccessful loan at Everton.

Football In brief

Europa League

PGMOL appalled at ‘abhorrent’ Taylor abuse

The Professional Game Match Officials Limited (PGMOL) says it is appalled by the “unjustified and abhorrent” abuse directed at Anthony Taylor after video footage emerged of him being accosted by angry fans at Budapest airport. Taylor and his family can be seen trying to evade a mob as he travelled home after refereeing Wednesday’s Europa League final between Roma and Sevilla, which the Spanish side won on penalties after an ill-tempered 1-1 draw. The Premier League official was criticised for his performance in the final by the Roma manager, José Mourinho, during his post-match press conference. In video footage, the former Chelsea and Manchester United manager was also seen gesticulating at Taylor in the stadium car park and heard saying “disgrace”. After the incident at the airport, the body responsible for officials in the English professional game said in a statement: “PGMOL is appalled at the unjustified and abhorrent abuse directed at Anthony.” **PA Media**

PSG

Galtier confirms Messi will play his final game

The Paris Saint-Germain manager, Christophe Galtier, has said Lionel Messi will play his final match for the club this weekend. Messi’s contract expires this summer. “This will be his last match at the Parc des Princes, and I hope that he will receive the warmest of welcomes,” said Galtier, whose team play Clermont Foot tomorrow. **PA Media**

▼ *Elena Rybakina continues her all-surface rise with a win in Paris*
LISI NIESNER/REUTERS



French Open

Rybakina harnesses power and patience to maintain challenge

Wimbledon champion relies on dominant first serve and progresses to third round

Tumaini Carayol
Roland Garros

Deep into the second set of Elena Rybakina's French Open second round match against Linda Noskova, a routine day on-court nearly became complicated. Having faced minimal problems throughout, Rybakina threw in a series of unforced errors on her serve while leading a set and 3-3. She quickly found herself down double break point.

Few players in the world today are as adept as Rybakina at navigating tough service games. Under pressure for the first time, the Kazakhstani found a couple of searing backhands and a couple of big serves, saving three break points in total. Rybakina held serve and then she broke immediately. Shortly after, she reached the third round with a 6-3, 6-3 win.

This season, the Wimbledon champion's all-surface rise has been one of the most notable developments. After winning at Indian Wells and reaching finals at the Australian Open and Miami, she closed off a fortnight on slow, damp clay courts in Rome as the unlikely winner of the Italian Open. Rybakina is the first women's player since Serena Williams in 2015 to simultaneously hold titles at WTA 1000 level and above on hard, clay and grass courts.

Her success is driven by her devastating first serve. Rybakina is the WTA's ace leader, averaging 7.9 aces per match, and her 73.9% of first serve points won places her second on the tour this year. For Noskova, the pressure of holding on to her own serve was immense.

Rybakina's serve has long been a massive weapon but she continues to make small adjustments. This season, she made a small change to her service motion in search of a more consistent delivery: "It's just trying to get more serves with the same motion, to get this power and just the timing, I would say. So it's nonstop work," she said, smiling.

There are ample players with immense power and weapons, but few are able to harness their power consistently. Rybakina's success is as much down to the patience and control she has learned, attacking big targets and punishing opponents with her weight of shot rather than directly aiming for lines. It also remains one of her biggest challenges.

She said: "Sometimes I feel like: 'OK, the ball is quite easy, and I can go for it,' but at these moments I need more patience. Not every ball, even if it looks like you can really attack and move in, because especially here, the conditions are a bit different. It's not easy to finish the rally. You need to come forward. This is something we're still improving."

This year marks the French Open's second year of incorporating night sessions into its daily schedule, a result of its lucrative partnership with Amazon Prime. Unlike at other tournaments, the night sessions consist of only one match and they are reserved exclusively for men's matches.

It is a complicated discussion; the disparity in treatment between the men's and women's is blatant, but the men's best-of-five-sets format is better suited to one-match tickets in terms of length. In reality, one-match night sessions are a bad idea in general. Not only are they the worst value ticket in tennis, but few players like to compete in cold clay-court conditions late into the night. Since night matches are broadcast on Amazon Prime rather than France Télévisions, the free-to-air national broadcaster, the audience is considerably lower.

After her 6-4, 6-0 win over Claire Liu, Iga Swiatek noted that while she remains in favour of women receiving the same opportunities as men, she has been requesting day sessions. "My thoughts didn't really change," she said, "but honestly, I have to tell you that I kind of requested every day to play a day session because I felt like I played already night sessions in this clay court swing."

With Carlos Alcaraz, Novak Djokovic and Stefanos Tsitsipas all occupying the top half of the men's draw, Daniil Medvedev's first-round defeat by Thiago Seyboth Wild has left the bottom half extremely open. It became even more open as Jannik Sinner fell to Daniel Altmaier, the world No 79, 6-7 (0), 7-6 (7) 1-6, 7-6 (4) 7-5 after five hours and 26 minutes, the longest and most dramatic match of the tournament.

First Sinner failed to serve out the match and missed two match points at 5-4 in the fourth set, then it took Altmaier five match points to close out the exhausting battle. As Altmaier took in the achievement, the crowd chanting his name, he wept.

The top seed in the bottom half is the No 4, Casper Ruud, who defeated Giulio Zeppieri 6-3, 6-2, 4-6, 7-5, while Holger Rune, seeded sixth, was the beneficiary of a walkover after Gaël Monfils' withdrawal. In the bottom quarter, however, the 12th seed, Frances Tiafoe, and the 15th seed, Borna Coric, head the field.

The third round of the women's singles will see a fascinating teenage battle between the 16-year-old Mirra Andreeva, who eased through with a 6-1, 6-2 win over Diane Parry, and Coco Gauff, a 6-2, 6-3 winner over Julia Grabher.

Raducanu splits from coach amid injury layoff

Tumaini Carayol
Roland Garros

Emma Raducanu will have to find another new coach when she makes her return to professional tennis after announcing she has parted ways with Sebastian Sachs. Raducanu, who is recovering from surgeries to both hands and her ankle, said the decision was mutual in a statement on social media.

"I have really enjoyed Seb's coaching and working with him, it's unfortunate that circumstances made it unfeasible for both of us to continue right now and we have decided to part ways," she wrote on Twitter. "I wish Seb all the best moving forwards."

Sachs is another addition to the long list of coaches who have briskly entered and departed Raducanu's inner circle in such a short amount of time. Nigel Sears, Andrew Richardson, Torben Beltz and Dmitry Tursunov have also enjoyed brief stints with the Briton in the two years since her emergence at Wimbledon in 2021.

The 20-year-old has also sought out temporary help from other figures, including Jane O'Donoghue and the LTA coaches Louis Cayer and Iain Bates.

Even in a sport that sees a quick turnover of coaches, Raducanu has also built a reputation for her inability to establish a long-term partnership, particularly after her decision to not continue with Richardson immediately after her US Open title.

In this case, however, it is quite a predictable consequence of Raducanu's injury layoff. Raducanu and Sachs were still in the early stages of their partnership, having started work together in December.

Raducanu had to either commit to paying his salary throughout her period of inactivity, which is likely to last a similar period to the amount of time they have actively worked together, or else break it off and start again when she returns. Months of inactivity would have also been far from an ideal arrangement for Sachs, who at 31 is a young coach still trying to make his mark.

Andy Murray will return to action next week at the Lexus Surbiton Trophy. Having skipped the French Open to focus on his Wimbledon preparations, the former world No 1 has taken a wild card into the Challenger event. Venus Williams, meanwhile, will make her return to the Rothesay Classic in Birmingham having played there for the first time in 2019. The 42-year-old has not played a tournament since January but is returning for another grass season.

'It's unfortunate that circumstances made it unfeasible for us to continue'

Emma Raducanu
World No 107



▲ *Emma Raducanu was coached by Sebastian Sachs for less than six months*
ROBERT PRANGE/GETTY IMAGES

Racing

Dettori fears protests will hit 'beautiful' farewell Derby

Greg Wood

Frankie Dettori, who will be riding in the Derby at Epsom for the last time tomorrow, has said he hopes "this beautiful event" will not be affected by protesters from the animal rights group Animal Rising.

Speaking on BBC One's Breakfast programme, the jockey said: "Most of the people in racing, we actually do it because we love the animals," adding: "I don't really follow the politics, a lot of people have got issues about a lot of things in this day and age.

"I just hope things go smoothly on Saturday, that we can get racing without creating any problems for anyone or putting anyone in danger."

Dettori, 52, first rode in the Derby in 1992, finishing 16th of 17 starters on Pollen Count, and has won the race twice – in 2007 and 2015 – in 27 starts in the Epsom Classic.

He will ride Arrest, the winner of last month's Chester Vase, in tomorrow's race. John Gosden's colt drew stall 13 of 14 when the final declarations were made yesterday morning, and is currently the fourth-favourite, at around 11-2, to give Dettori a third and final victory in the Classic.

Dettori's final ride in the Oaks, meanwhile, will be aboard Soul Sister, the 5-2 second-favourite for the fillies' Classic today.

Animal Rising, a group that staged a demonstration at the Grand National at Aintree in April that led to a 15-minute delay, has said it intends to target the two-day Derby Festival, with the ultimate aim of stopping the Classic taking place. This is despite the Jockey Club, which owns and operates Epsom, being granted an injunction at the high court last week which would make activists liable for damages, and potentially imprisonment for contempt of court, if they enter or obstruct the track during the meeting.



Derby veteran Frankie Dettori will ride Arrest tomorrow

Tomorrow's race, conceived in the 18th century to establish the outstanding three-year-old middle-distance colt of every generation, will be the 244th in an unbroken line that stretches back to Diomed, the winner in 1780. "It's our biggest race," Dettori said. "When you start, that's the race you want to win. The Derby is like tennis players with Wimbledon or Formula One drivers [with] Monaco."



Max Verstappen's Red Bull team have won all six races this season

Formula One

Verstappen accepts Red Bull could win every race

Giles Richards
Barcelona

Max Verstappen has conceded his utterly dominant Red Bull team could win every Formula One race this season. The world champion has previously steered away from acknowledging the likelihood of completing a first clean sweep of F1 wins, but with six consecutive victories this year he has said the team look all but unbeatable on pure pace.

Verstappen and Red Bull have demonstrated their car's strengths across the full gamut of circuits and, with a win in the rain at the last round in Monaco, in a range of weather conditions. As things stand they cannot be matched in race pace by their nearest challengers, Aston Martin and Ferrari, with Mercedes still some way off.

The world champion has previously been circumspect but has now said they could complete a clean sweep, despite caveats.

"How it looks at the moment, I think we can," Verstappen said as he prepared for this weekend's Spanish Grand Prix, which is round seven of 22. "But that is very unlikely to happen, there are always things that can go wrong or a retirement or whatever but purely on pace at the moment it looks like [it's possible]. But we will always get to tracks where it doesn't work out, or bad luck in qualifying and you make your own mistakes."

Lewis Hamilton, who won several of his seven titles in a then dominant Mercedes, emphasised that with the right car a driver has all the advantages that they can exploit.

"Is [repeatedly winning] difficult? No, it gets easier once you get used to it," he said. "When you have performance in hand you are not having to make risky choices in practice to get an extra half a tenth. You don't have to push the bodywork as tight as possible, to be on the limit of temperatures, you have breathing space … it's a great feeling when you know you have a car you can compete with."

Verstappen has shown few signs of weakness this season and the Red Bull's reliability has increasingly looked bulletproof. He has four wins from six. His teammate, Sergio Pérez, has two victories but after failing to score points in Monaco he already trails Verstappen by 39 points.

McCollum's Test inactivity highlights Ireland's plight

Shoestring operation reliant on distributions from ICC and longest format of game at risk due to financial limitations

Andy Bull
Lord's

High summer came just a couple of hours late to Lord's. It arrived round about lunchtime, when the sun came out from behind the clouds that had blanketed the ground earlier in the day. It was huddle-up and clutch-your-cuppa weather in the morning, and a thankless time for batting. By lunch, though, the place was *en fête*. A cream-coated dixieland jazz band was parping brass in the Harris Garden, and that side of the ground was alive with panama hats, cravats and candy-cane coloured blazers and caps. The Test season had started at last.

By then, Ireland's batting was as good as broken. They had taken a beating in the first hour of the day, 15 for one, 19 for two, 19 for three, a hair's breadth from 19 for four when Stuart Broad almost had Paul Stirling first ball. Ireland's opener James McCollum just about pulled his team through it. He had 29 off 93 balls at the break, a tidy little innings in which he rode out a couple of torrid passages when he was beaten inside, outside, and every which way by Matthew Potts, who worked the ball both up and down the slope.

It is worth stopping on McCollum, since, soft hands, sure feet, steady defence, he has the makings of a Test match batting technique. He is 27 already, made his first-class debut six years ago, but has played only 22 games, the majority of them for the Northern Knights, who are based in Belfast, back in 2018 and 2019. In the four years since, he's played exactly five first-class matches, one of them an Ireland A game in 2021, three more the Tests Ireland played in Bangladesh and Sri Lanka this year, and the other a warm-up against Essex last week. England's Ben Duckett, by comparison, is only a year older, and has played 128.

In this, McCollum is pretty typical. The best young batter in his team, Harry Tector and Lorcan Tucker, have, like him, both played those same five first-class games since 2019.

"I don't know much about red ball cricket," Tucker said before this game. "I've hardly played any in four years." Batting against Broad on a cloudy morning at Lord's is tough enough, doing it when you've only played five games of first-class cricket in four years, and three of them were in Sri Lanka and Bangladesh, is an impossible job. They are being set up to fail.

It isn't supposed to be like this. Cricket Ireland set up a first-class competition shortly before they won Test status, but they had to suspend it during the pandemic.

> ***The Irish fought to play Test cricket, it must feel like they've arrived to watch it wind down***

They wanted to start it up again this season but they couldn't afford to do it. They had a deficit of €176,184 last year, about £150,000, and €1,230,869 the year before.

It is a shoestring operation, run on goodwill and spit. They have a budget of about €12m a year, and rely in large part on distributions from the International Cricket Council. Plans to restart the first-class competition in 2024 depend on how much they are awarded for the next four years. In the meantime, they have no choice but to prioritise one-day cricket, and hope they can qualify for the World Cup this autumn, which would be worth €1m to them. The Irish fought for years for the right to play Test cricket, it must feel like they have arrived just in time to watch it wind down.

Make no mistake, outside the four walls of Lord's, the format is struggling. Ireland have hosted exactly one Test, the first they ever played, and it lost them €1m. They aren't alone in that. Unless they're playing against India, England, or Australia, most countries simply can't afford to play it any more.

The England and Wales Cricket Board's new chief executive, Richard Gould, touched on all this in an interview in the match programme. "Test cricket has what some would regard as an antiquated commercial system whereby a touring team doesn't receive any payment other than expenses," Gould explained. "They're relying on their own domestic markets to finance their Test team. These are things which we need to look at, in the same way the Indian Premier League pays boards for their players, we may need to do something to provide a market reaction."

It will be interesting to see if the ECB does follow through on this. It would cost it, but it would be money well spent.

The ECB isn't so very rich - as Gould said himself in another recent interview, its commercial revenue is dwarfed by those of a lot of Premier League football teams. But everything's relative. The revenue generated for the local economy by this one Test would run Irish cricket for a year; given what they charge for ice creams here, the confectionary take alone would probably be enough to prop up one of the Irish provinces for a summer. Gould's is a good plan, and suggests that, for the first time in a long while, the game here is being run by someone who understands what needs to be done.



TOM JENKINS/THE GUARDIAN

▲ *James McCollum has the makings of a Test match batter with soft hands and a steady defence*

Broad 'half expected' to see protesters on Lord's pitch

Continued *from back page*

my family". He said: "At the end of my mark for my first over I was a bit nervous but as soon as I got that first ball down it sort of settled the nerves, and I thought I started quite well. I went to the short-ball stuff later, which I enjoy doing.

"The main thing is trying to get wickets and not worrying about runs, and I thought if I was doing that at one end we were going to pick up wickets at the other end, which we did."

The only thing that really troubled England all day was an intervention from Just Stop Oil protesters, who blocked the team bus as it made its way to Lord's.

"They made a mistake actually - if they wanted to stop us they shouldn't have kept on walking at the traffic lights because they just gave us an exit route," Broad said. "I was half expecting to see them on the pitch

> ***'If they wanted to stop us they shouldn't have kept on walking'***
> **Stuart Broad**

at some point today but they only caused us a five-minute delay."

Heinrich Malan, the Ireland coach, felt his side had made England's task unnecessarily straightforward. "There's disappointment about the way we went about our business," he said.

"There were a couple of soft dismissals, and obviously the way we bowled at the back end there we didn't necessarily cover ourselves in glory. So there's a bit of self-reflection going on at the minute. They batted pretty well, but we bowled pretty averagely."

▼ Zak Crawley and Ben Duckett combined for a rapid opening stand of 109
TOM JENKINS/THE GUARDIAN



Broad up to his old tricks as he opens the grand summer show

Ali Martin
Lord's

Stuart Broad was up to his old tricks on the opening day of the Test summer. Not his new tricks, like the voiding of Ashes series or talking up the outswinger he claims to have calibrated specifically for Australia's star right-handers. Rather, he was being ruinous with a Dukes ball and making selection for the main event a touch trickier.

Broad is long past the point of needing to prove himself, of course. And Ireland are a side lacking experience in first-class cricket, let alone in Tests. Still, with Jimmy Anderson, Ollie Robinson and Mark Wood in bubble wrap this week, there are no guarantees he will start the Ashes and so figures of five for 51 – a first honours board appearance for 10 years – were a useful nudge as to his form and fitness.

Once the visitors were rolled for 172 all out in 56.2 overs, their dismissals met with reserved cheers by a Lord's crowd increasingly mindful of the mismatch, there was also a typically assertive response from England's top order in the bright sunshine.

The threat will ramp up a good few notches in a fortnight's time at Edgbaston but at stumps, having scorched to 152 for one from just 25 overs, they trailed by just 20 runs.

On a day that underlined the foothills of Test cricket Ireland find themselves in, and England's chief cause for concern was a short delay to their journey to Lord's caused by Just Stop Oil protesters, it may be here where Ben Stokes and Brendon McCullum drew most satisfaction. Anxiety over the solidity of England's top order may be an external thing, and the attack here was benign, but runs are never unwelcome.

Not least in the case of Zak Crawley, driving his second ball for four and notching 10 more with varying degrees of control in a 39-ball half-century. Crawley will see it as a missed opportunity for three figures, however, perishing to a fine caught and bowled from the debutant Fionn Hand on 56. Ben Duckett, unbeaten on 60 from 71 balls, will still fancy a hundred in his first outing on home soil, while Ollie Pope will resume after a zesty 29 not out.

There was a tinge of green in the stands, less so on a pitch relaid over the winter. England have requested "fast, flat" surfaces for their encounters with Australia this summer and after the emerald one rolled out for Ireland's previous visit four years ago, this was a more placid, beige affair, albeit not exactly the Gabba by way of bounce. Keen to push the game on and with early cloud cover overhead, Stokes had little hesitation in asking the visitors to bat upon winning the toss. He may have also been keen to tear the packaging off his new toy, Josh Tongue, who had been flanked by family members in the team huddle when presented with his England cap by Anderson.

Anderson was in his shoes 20 years ago and got the new ball. Tongue had to wait his turn, however, with Broad and the recalled Matthew Potts sharing duties and the latter enjoying his return to the Nursery End. By the seventh over Ireland were 19 for three, almost four down only for Paul Stirling to overturn an lbw decision off his first ball.

'Make no mistake, outside of the four walls of Lord's, Test cricket is struggling'
Andy Bull *Page 39* →

Broad had to settle for a double-wicket maiden to follow his initial removal of the opener Peter Moor lbw for 10. Andy Balbirnie, the Ireland captain, came into the Test off the back of a duck in his side's solitary warm-up at Essex and fared no better here, nicking to slip. Harry Tector, a bright young thing boasting four one-day international centuries, then made it a second blob when he glanced Broad to leg slip.

That Potts was stationed there so early in a Test was typical of Stokes. The captain's fingerprints could also be found all over Jack Leach's figures of three for 35 from 14 overs, keeping the field up for his trusted spinner and watching first Stirling (30) and then Lorcan Tucker (18) perish playing the sweep either side of lunch.

At the interval Ireland were 78 for four – New Zealand were 39 for six at the same juncture last summer – and resistance had come from James McCollum. Light on returns from his first five Tests but fresh from a century at Chelmsford, the opener was calm and compact while top-scoring with 36. Shortly after the restart, though, he was mugged by Broad,



Day one scoreboard

Lord's England trail Ireland by 20 runs with nine first-innings wickets remaining.

Ireland First innings		Balls	4s	6s
JA McCollum c Root b Broad	**36**	108	5	0
PJ Moor lbw b Broad	**10**	12	2	0
***A Balbirnie** c Crawley b Broad	**0**	5	0	0
HT Tector c Potts b Broad	**0**	2	0	0
PR Stirling c Bairstow b Leach	**30**	35	5	0
†LJ Tucker lbw b Leach	**18**	33	2	0
C Campher b Leach	**33**	79	6	0
AR McBrine c Bairstow b Potts	**19**	23	3	0
MR Adair b Broad	**14**	32	2	0
F Hand c Bairstow b Potts	**1**	7	0	0
GI Hume not out	**0**	3	0	0
Extras (b1, lb9, nb1)	**11**			
Total (56.2 overs)	**172**			

Fall 15, 19, 19, 64, 98, 104, 142, 169, 172.

Bowling Broad 17-5-51-5; Potts 12.2-4-36-2; Tongue 13-4-40-0; Leach 14-2-35-3.

England First innings		Balls	4s	6s
Z Crawley c & b Hand	**56**	45	11	0
BM Duckett not out	**60**	71	8	0
OJD Pope not out	**29**	35	5	0
Extras (b4, lb1, w1, nb1)	**7**			
Total (for 1, 25 overs)	**152**			

Fall 109.

To bat JE Root, HC Brook, *BA Stokes, †JM Bairstow, SCJ Broad, MJ Potts, JC Tongue, MJ Leach.

Bowling Adair 7-1-59-0; Hume 8-0-29-0; Hand 7-1-42-1; Campher 3-0-17-0.

Toss England elected to field.

Umpires AT Holdstock (SA) and P Wilson (Aus).

who got one to hold its line against the slope and fly to first slip.

Tongue's first outing showed the attributes that have helped him leapfrog Chris Woakes. Consistently clocking in the high 80s on the speed gun and hitting 91mph in his first spell, the 25-year-old was used primarily as a bang-in bowler by Stokes. Tongue may have gone wicketless from his 13 overs, much to the dismay of headline writers, but delivered a taste of the hurry-up he will offer.

With Stokes opting against a trundle himself, the wickets were shared elsewhere. Potts finished with two for 36, dousing Andy McBrine's gutsy 19 and the last man, Hand, while Leach enjoyed bowling Curtis Campher when, on 33, the all-rounder tried to launch him. Jonny Bairstow, a source of energy on his return behind the stumps, if troubled by the odd ball that wobbled late, felt similar.

But it was Broad who led England off the field after tea, a 20th five-wicket haul secured when Mark Adair's off stump was sent tumbling. Was this the fabled new outswinger? Nope, this one moved in.

Besides, he's saving his new creation for Steve Smith and Marnus Labuschagne, a meeting that may well be brought forward after this performance.

Analysis



Simon Burnton *Lord's*

Stokes' aggressive approach sees England stick Tongue out on big stage to make promising case

The sun came just before lunch, breaking the blanket of cloud which had looked so encouraging as England started the day. "We're here to score runs, take wickets and win games – and we like to do all three as quickly as we can," enthused Ben Stokes in the programme, and after winning the toss and taking the briefest glance at the concrete-grey slab that hung over the ground there seemed no doubt that his quickest route to victory lay through unleashing his bowlers to cause chaos with a new ball and a green-tinged pitch.

But England weren't just here for that, given they had very deliberately decided not to select the team that would be most likely to take wickets and win the game as quickly as possible. A minor groin strain and an abundance of caution meant Jimmy Anderson would have no chance here to add to his 685 Test wickets, and the recent memory of an ankle problem was enough to rule out Ollie Robinson.

Chris Woakes, who has 27 wickets at an average of 11.33 in five games at Lord's for his country, has no fitness difficulties and seemed pretty convinced on Wednesday afternoon that he would be making his first Test appearance in 14 months, was left out on the basis that, as Stokes explained, "everyone knows what he offers".

No, England weren't primarily here to score runs or take wickets. They were here to go through the motions, to hone their competitive edge with an eye on the Ashes, to ease Jonny Bairstow back into the team after injury and to assess the one member of the side who retained an air of mystery. Stokes chose to bowl and the stage was set: this would be Tongue's test.

Josh Tongue collected his cap from Anderson before play and the ball and a pat on the back from Stuart Broad as he prepared for his first over. Before he starts his run-up, his left hand reaches across his chest to deliver the ball to his right and then stays there as if held in a sling as he pounds his way towards the crease. He is, of course, familiar with slings, having endured two failed operations on his right shoulder, and 14 months out of the game, before a doctor suggested that Botox injections may alleviate the pressure on a trapped nerve that was causing near-constant pain. He is not the first person to be rejuvenated by Botox, but rarely can its effect have been more convincing. If he uses his time here to seek advice from Anderson, 15 years his senior, perhaps Tongue can offer some in return on how it feels to seriously consider retirement.

From the start and throughout Tongue's pace was good, edging occasionally beyond 90mph, and his accuracy likewise. He started with a maiden, and then another. Just before lunch he came back with instructions to bowl short at James McCollum, allowing the captain to assess another facet of his game and the batter to repeatedly duck out of the way, and those appeared to remain his orders throughout the following session. This tactic never seemed the most likely method of taking wickets as quickly as possible, but then that wasn't the point.

> *Tongue's first day as a Test cricketer brought no moment of vindication but plenty of positives to take for the future*

By mid-afternoon every bowler had a wicket but Tongue, and if there was no sign of desperation in the way he bowled perhaps there was in the way he appealed for lbw when another short ball glanced off Curtis Campher's helmet and deflected to Bairstow. Stokes had already burned two reviews, including one when an excellent delivery from Tongue forced McCollum into awkward evasive action and flicked what turned out to be a pocket on its way through. As the players huddled to consider another, the captain was notably absent, Stokes timing his arrival for the moment the DRS timer ticked to zero and providing once there only consolation.

Tongue bowled only three more overs, and not at all after tea. So there was no moment of celebration and vindication to crown Tongue's first day as a Test cricketer, but plenty of positives to take from it (particularly for the old family friend who collected £50,000 courtesy of a bet he placed back in 2009 that the then 11-year-old would one day represent his country). A player who 12 months ago was considering his career in the past tense is now one for the future.

But in the end it was Broad, courtesy of a 20th five-wicket haul in Tests, who stood out. He did so as he took the field, the only player wearing a bright white wide-brimmed hat while all around him chose caps, and he did so as he departed, when he was the one holding the ball in the air while all around him applauded. Perhaps everyone knows what he offers, but sometimes the same old answers are also the right ones.



◀ *Josh Tongue went without a wicket in his first innings as an England bowler, as Stuart Broad's five wickets helped England skittle Ireland for 172*
TOM JENKINS/THE GUARDIAN

Results

Football

FIFA U20 WORLD CUP

Last 16 Ecuador L South Korea; Gambia 0 Uruguay 1

CINCH SCOTTISH PREMIERSHIP PLAYOFFS

Final: First leg

Partick Thistle	(2) **2**	**Ross County**	(0) **0**
Fitzpatrick 9			
Graham 45		7,291	

BUNDESLIGA PLAYOFFS

First leg VfB Stuttgart 3 Hamburg 0

Cricket

VITALITY T20 BLAST

North Group: Grace Road Derbyshire 189-5 (WL Madsen 109no). Derbyshire 187-5 (CN Ackermann 59no). Derbyshire beat Leicestershire by two runs.

Headingley Yorkshire 195-6 (DJ Malan 83). Lancashire 180-8. Yorkshire beat Lancashire by 15 runs.

South Group: Hove Essex 163-7 (F Khushi 55). Sussex 138 (SR Harmer 4-28). Essex beat Sussex by 25 runs.

Tennis

FRENCH OPEN (Roland Garros)

Men: Third round: H Rune (Den) bt G Monfils (Fr) w/o; **G Olivieri** (Arg) bt A Vavassori (It) 7-6 (7) 3-6 6-4 7-6 (3); **N Jarry** (Chl) bt T Paul (US) 3-6 6-1 6-4 7-5; **M Giron** (US) bt J Lehecka (Cz) 6-2 6-3 6-2; **Zhang Z** (Chn) bt T Agustín Tirante (Arg) 7-6 (3) 6-3 6-4; **C Ruud** (Nor) bt G Zeppieri (It) 6-3 6-2 4-6 7-5; **D Altmaier** (Ger) bt J Sinner (It) 6-7 (0) 7-6 (7) 1-6 7-6 (4) 7-5; **G Dimitrov** (Bul) bt E Ruusuvuori (Fin) 7-6 (7-4) 6-3 6-4; **F Tiafoe** (US) bt A Karatsev (Rus) 3-6 6-3 7-5 6-2; **B Coric** (Cro) bt P Cachin (Arg) 6-3 4-6 4-6 6-3 6-4; **T Martin Etcheverry** (Arg) bt A De Minaur (Aus) 6-3 7-6 (2) 6-3; **Y Nishioka** (Jpn) bt M Purcell (Aus) 4-6 6-2 7-5 6-4; **T Seyboth Wild** (Bra) bt G Pella (Arg) 6-3 3-6 6-4 6-3; **F Cerundolo** (Arg) bt Y Hanfmann (Ger) 6-3 6-3 6-4; **A Zverev** (Ger) bt A Molcan (Ser) 6-4 6-2 6-1

Women: Second round: I Swiatek (Pol) bt C Liu (US) 6-4 6-0; **Wang X-y** (Chn) bt R Peterson (Swe) 7-6 (5) 6-2; **L Tsurenko** (Ukr) bt L Davis (US) 6-3 1-0 ret; **A Schmiedlova** (Svk) bt A Bolsova (Sp) 6-3 6-4; K Day (US) bt M Keys (US) 6-2 4-6 6-4; **M Andreeva** (Rus) bt D Parry (Fr) 6-1 6-2; **C Gauff** (US) bt J Grabher (Aut) 6-2 6-3; **E Rybakina** (Kaz) bt L Noskova (Cz) 6-3 6-3; **S Sorribes Tormo** (Sp) bt P Martic (Cro) 6-4 6-1; **E Alexandrova** (Rus) bt AL Friedsam (Ger) 6-2 6-0; **B Haddad Maia** (Bra) bt D Shnaider (Rus) 6-2 5-7 6-4; **E Cocciaretto** (It) bt S Waltert (Swi) 6-2 6-3; **B Pera** (US) bt D Vekic (Cro) 3-6 6-4 6-3; **O Danilovic** (Ser) bt J Paolini (It) 6-2 7-5; **O Jabeur** (Tun) bt O Dodin (Fr) 6-2 6-3; **B Andreescu** (Can) bt E Navarro (US) 6-1 6-4; **K Day** (US) bt M Keys (US) 6-2 4-6 6-4

Golf

PORSCHE EUROPEAN OPEN (Winsen, Germany)

Leading first-round scores (GB/Ire unless stated)
69 S Forsström (Swe); M Kieffer (Ger). **70** Jo Smith; M Helligkilde (Den); J Luiten (Neth); K Krogh Johannessen (Nor). **71** M Siem (Ger); E Ferguson; Jannik De Bruyn (Ger); P Waring; J Brun (Fr); S Tarrio (Sp); F Schott (Ger). **72** C Hill; A Björk (Swe); I Elvira (Sp); J Guerrier (Fr); T McKibbin; R Paratore (It). **73** J Campillo (Sp); S Crocker (US); M Baldwin; L Bjerregaard (Den); H Long (Ger); C Syme; E Pepperell; R Langasque (Fr); D Whitnell; M Jordan; N Nørgaard Møller (Den); C Sordet (Fr); M Gandas (Ind); A del Rey (Sp); P Figueiredo (Por); J Lee (US); M Lorenzo-Vera (Fr); N Lemke (Swe); F Lacroix (Fr); O Lengden (Swe). **74** A Arnaus (Sp); E Molinari (It); S Kjeldsen (Den); A Sullivan; O Hundeboell (Den); J Ko (Fr); J Parry; J Murphy; A Wilson; A Garcia-Heredia (Sp); F Laporta (It); M Hammer (Ger); U Coussaud (Fr)

MEMORIAL TOURNAMENT (Dublin, Ohio)

Early leading first-round scores (US unless stated)
68 M Wallace (Eng). **69** A Eckroat; A Hadwin (Can); S Lowry (Ire); M Hubbard; D Willett (Eng). **70** W Clark; Im S (Kor); S Power (Ire); J Rahm (Sp); P Rodgers; A Scott (Aus); J Suh

Fixtures

Football
Uefa U17 European Championship
Final Germany v France (7pm)

Rugby league
Betfred Championship
Newcastle v Bradford (7.45pm)

Cricket (6.30pm unless stated)
First one-day international
Sri Lanka v Afghanistan, Hambantota (5.30am)
Vitality T20 Blast
North Group Derbyshire v Warwickshire, Derby (7pm); Durham v Lancashire, Riverside; Northamptonshire v Leicestershire; Nottinghamshire v Worcestershire, Trent Bridge
South Group Essex v Hampshire, Chelmsford (7pm); Glamorgan v Kent, Sophia Gardens; Gloucestershire v Surrey, Bristol (6.45pm); Somerset v Middlesex, Taunton
Charlotte Edwards Cup
Goup stage Diamonds v Blaze, Riverside (2.30pm)

Greg Wood's racing tips

Carlisle **1.10** Willing To Please **1.40** Kylian **2.15** Iris Dancer **2.50** B Associates **3.25** Little Red Dancer **4.05** Slippin Jimmy **4.45** La Feile **5.16** Tarbat Ness

Chepstow **1.20** Ticket To Alaska **1.50** Monte Linas **2.25** Rhubarb **3.00** Some Nightmare **3.35** Dundory **4.15** Escarpment **4.50** Dog Fox

Epsom **2.00** Yorkshire Terrier **2.35** Fantastic Fox (nap) **3.10** Westover (nb) **3.45** Bad Company **4.30** Running Lion **5.10** Holguin **5.45** Urban Sprawl

Doncaster **5.05** Wadi Bani **5.40** Modesty **6.15** Diamondonthehill **6.45** Aimeric **7.15** Perfuse **7.45** Maxzeno **8.15** Another Run **8.50** Bookmark

Stratford **5.35** Magic Saint **6.05** Solomon Grey **6.35** Quintin's Man **7.05** Secret Investor **7.35** Caryto Des Brosses **8.05** Raleagh Flora **8.40** Old Gold

Catterick **5.55** Golden Gal **6.25** Invincible Royale **6.55** Scottish Dancer **7.25** Eeh Bah Gum **7.55** Written Broadcast **8.25** Elusive Angel **9.00** Prospect

They bang the drums
Varane and Dias on how United and City go about winning the Manchester Cup final

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Miles ahead
Verstappen backs Red Bull to top every race this season

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Sport



Report and analysis from day one at Lord's
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▲ *Stuart Broad celebrates removing Peter Moor before finishing with figures of five for 51*
ALEX DAVIDSON/GETTY IMAGES

'As good as it gets'
Broad's five-star Ireland burst lights flame on Ashes summer

Simon Burnton
Lord's

Stuart Broad said England's bowlers had blown away their doubters as well as Ireland's batters on the first day of the Test summer, after England's three-seamer attack, augmented by the spin of Jack Leach, bowled the visitors out for 172 before England raced to within 20 of their score in only 25 overs for the loss of one wicket.

"When you win the toss and bowl your aim is to try and bowl the team out in a day, so to have done that was a big tick for our bowling attack," Broad said. "Then I thought the way the three guys played this evening was exactly the mindset that Baz and Stokesy want.

"It was positive, it was aggressive, it put the bowlers under pressure, and we'll hopefully see a bit more of that on Friday."

Broad led the way with the ball, taking five wickets for 51, his 20th five-wicket haul in Tests but his first at Lord's for more than a decade.

"You can't underestimate the feeling of seeing your name on the honours board here because it is the most famous in the world and it is very special to get on it," he said.

"I've always loved playing here, it gives me such a buzz to walk through that long room and on to that pitch.

"A few of us were out there at tea when the sun was shining for one of the first times this season and we were all saying, 'How good's this? Blue sky at Lord's, a crowd in, Test match, it's as good as it gets.'

"I actually felt probably in the best rhythm of the summer so far. To come into the first game of the international summer and really hit my straps and feel like I was on the money is a great start for me.

"I don't rely on confidence at my age, I know I can bowl well and where the ball is going, but it's always a nice lift when you have some wickets behind you."

Josh Tongue may not have got that particular lift but he nevertheless described his first experience of Test cricket as "a very proud day for myself and

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Allardyce to depart Leeds with Rodgers on shortlist

Louise Taylor

Sam Allardyce and Leeds have decided to go their separate ways after the Elland Road club's relegation to the Championship.

Although Allardyce presided over the collection of only one point during his four-match interim tenure at the end of the season, the staff and players at Leeds were highly impressed by his management style and the possibility of keeping the former England manager in the post next season was seriously considered.

Yet after a day of discussions with the West Yorkshire club's chief executive, Angus Kinnear, yesterday, it emerged that no agreement was reached, dictating that Allardyce is set to leave Elland Road as Leeds step up their search for a manager to lead a Championship promotion challenge.

Allardyce's appointment came at the end of a chaotic campaign in which Leeds sacked Jesse Marsch in February and his interim successor, Javi Gracia, at the start of May when they enticed the 68-year-old out of retirement for the final four games.

Whoever takes charge next season is likely to do so against a backdrop of considerable uncertainty. While it is unclear whether a successor to the recently sacked former director of football, Victor Orta, will be appointed or that position scrapped, the club's ownership remains opaque.

This turbulent backdrop is unlikely to persuade either Brendan Rodgers or Graham Potter to take charge of the team this summer. Nonetheless, both are likely to feature on a shortlist also expected to include West Brom's Carlos Corberán and Lorient's Régis Le Bris.

While Corberán previously served as Marcelo Bielsa's first-team coach at Leeds, Le Bris is regarded as a rising star of French coaching.



Sam Allardyce will leave after failing to keep Leeds afloat


who gives a crap
who gives a crap
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who gives a crap
who gives a crap

Hehe, this is the newspaper's backside

1 million trees are cut down every day to make traditional toilet paper. We think that's crap, but luckily there's something you can do about it. Our recycled loo roll helps prevent deforestation so your backside can uncrap the world.



who gives a crap

bamboo | recycled*

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Millennials' thinking on tax ought to be a gamechanger *Gaby Hinsliff, page 3*
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The Guardian Friday 2 June 2023

Journal

Opinion and ideas



ILLUSTRATION: NATE KITCH

One Welsh mine shows us who's paying for fossil capitalism

George Monbiot



When you're in a hole, keep digging. This is the strategy of opencast miners across the world: our past debts and future liabilities can one day be discharged if only we're allowed to dig a little deeper and extract a little more. And public authorities keep falling for it.

The UK's biggest opencast coalmine, Ffos-y-Fran in south Wales, was granted permission in 2005 on the grounds that it would rehabilitate a hill, on the outskirts of Merthyr Tydfil, that had been made dangerous by the shafts and spoil heaps left by deep mining. It wasn't called a coalmine but a "land reclamation scheme". If the reclaimers happened to stumble across 11m tonnes of coal while improving the land by digging a 400-hectare (1,000-acre) pit, 200 metres deep, who could blame them for taking it?

In 2007, as the works commenced, I wrote an article arguing that, as local people had pointed out, there were much simpler, quicker and more reliable ways of reclaiming the land, which did not involve ruining people's lives by blasting, digging and trucking for 17 years, and releasing 30m tonnes of carbon dioxide from the coal extracted. But the council, under pressure from Tony Blair's government, had bought into the story. It even allowed the miners to work without the usual protections for local people, encroaching to within 36 metres of some homes.

Never mind: after 17 years of hell, the land would be restored, using some of the money made from extracting the coal. The hole would be filled and the hill rebuilt. The mining firm, originally Miller Argent, now Merthyr (South Wales) Ltd, would deposit the reclamation money in an escrow account held by the council. But in 2014, the Welsh government warned that only £15m had been deposited in this account, while the reclamation might cost £50m.

Since then the price of coal has boomed, but the fund still stands at £15m, while the estimated cost of restoring the landscape has risen to between £75m and £125m. The rehabilitation was meant to be completed by the end of next year, but there is no sign it has begun. Far from reclaiming the land, the mine has created a much bigger problem: where the hill stood in 2007, there is now a great pit above whose sheer sides the homes of local people perch.

So last year the company applied to the council again. With astonishing

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One Welsh mine shows us who's paying for fossil capitalism

George Monbiot

← Continued from front

chutzpah, it argued that it should be allowed to extend its mining beyond the agreed deadline of September 2022, on the grounds that "there are insufficient funds within the escrow and restoration fund to allow for the full and successful implementation of the current restoration strategy for the site". This time the council refused permission. But reports in the Guardian and Private Eye over the past fortnight suggest unauthorised mining has continued at Ffos-y-Fran.

There are similar issues with pits across south Wales. In 2010, Celtic Energy sold its opencast coalmines - with its restoration liabilities - for £1 apiece to a series of shell companies it had set up in the British Virgin Islands. Then the senior executives walked away with millions. Six people were charged with fraud, but the judge found that, while some might regard their actions as "dishonest" or "reprehensible", they were not illegal.

Today, the four giant holes dug by Celtic Energy - East Pit, Nant Helen, Margam and Selar - remain unrestored or partly restored. Land that was supposed to have been rehabilitated into country parks, tourist attractions or housing developments is instead blighted by bare spoil heaps, drums of chemicals, rusting machinery and steep drops into pools of filthy water. As at Ffos-y-Fran, Celtic Energy applied for extensions, arguing they were necessary to pay for land restoration, but the net result was bigger holes.

In East Ayrshire, Clay Cross in Derbyshire and other parts of the country where coal has been mined, broken promises have left communities with a broken land. It's a classic privatisation disaster. When coal was privatised by John Major's government in 1994, the new companies were granted a 10-year exemption from paying the money to be set aside for decommissioning the mine. In return, they agreed to buy the right to mine at a higher cash price. In common with other privatisations - which could be characterised as legalised theft from the public realm - this higher price was still well below the potential value of the assets. To make matters worse, the requirement to start paying into escrow accounts after 10 years was not backed by effective legislation. The companies got the profits, the public got the costs.

Now, as well as land blight, there is a potential toxic legacy. Disused mines are one of the most potent sources of water pollution, and can keep discharging for hundreds of years. The River Esk in Scotland, for example, is still being polluted by coal workings from the 13th century. As the opencast pits fill with water, into which sulphides and metal salts leach, these toxins can spread into aquifers, drain into rivers and contaminate the land when rivers flood. No one seems to have a plan for averting this outcome.

There are similar stories in many parts of the world. In the Appalachians and the Illinois basin in the US, coal firms have walked away from environmental disasters. Homes are flooded by minewater, rivers are poisoned, mountaintops remain truncated.

One estimate suggests there are also 123,000 abandoned, uncapped oilwells in the US; another that plugging derelict oil and gas wells in the Gulf of Mexico alone - which threaten to discharge methane into the atmosphere and crude oil into the ocean - would cost $30bn. Most of this money should be provided by the oil majors that drilled them, which have a combined capitalisation of $1.2tn, but they are surrounded by the political defensive wall they have bought: the state and federal legislators who obstruct any attempt to hold them to account. In the Niger delta in Nigeria, blighted by decades of oil spills, many people now have no option but to abandon their lands and seek to rebuild their lives elsewhere.

It's capitalism made visible: extract the money, dump the costs, abandon the community and move to the next frontier. And this is before you count the much greater liability of the carbon dioxide these corporations have released, for which there was never a clean-up plan. We are all in the hole the fossil fuel companies have left. It is time to stop digging.

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'Comment is free... but facts are sacred' CP Scott

Covid-19 inquiry

The government is wasting our time by trying to stop the handover of evidence

As with everything else involving Boris Johnson, theatricality looms large in the dispute over whether his WhatsApps, diaries and notebooks should be released without redaction to the official Covid-19 inquiry. The Cabinet Office had until 4pm yesterday to comply with a demand from the inquiry chair, Lady Hallett, to hand them all over. After the deadline passed, the standoff soon morphed into a high-stakes court challenge by ministers. Apart from anything else, this means further delays to an already slow inquiry process.

This dispute could have been seen coming. Ever since Lady Hallett was appointed in 2021 to conduct what Mr Johnson called "a forensic and thoroughgoing" inquiry into the UK's response to the pandemic, it was blindingly clear that she would need to see all the evidence about the government's handling. Since Lady Hallett was appointed under the Inquiries Act 2005, it was also clear that she had the powers to compel witnesses and evidence. Her moral position was strengthened further this week when Mr Johnson handed all his papers to the Cabinet Office and said they should be passed to the inquiry.

That pulled a lot of rug from under the government's feet. For once, though, this dispute is not primarily about Mr Johnson. Instead it concerns, first, the public credibility of the way that British government does modern public inquiries and, second, the extent to which accountability of government is practicable in a digital and doubting world. Mr Johnson only moves centre stage over a third issue: the impact of all this on his own career. The main issue is whether the inquiry has the power to decide which documents it can study. Lady Hallett says that power is hers, given by law. The government, represented by the Cabinet Office, claims that it can decide some material is "unambiguously irrelevant". Law and politics say Lady Hallett is right. The courts will now decide. There will be terrible reputational damage to the inquiry if the government succeeds. The way it tried to duck and weave about the material during May adds to this.

An important second issue is how the inquiry should cope with the digital revolution. When communication was confined to spoken conversations, of which no verbatim record exists, or to paper, which tends to be more formal and considered, the government could control its own message. In the social media age, these ways have been swamped by digital messaging, where protocols and habits of expression are vastly different. As Rafael Behr argues in Politics: A Survivor's Guide: "There is an element of performance in digital interactions that has little equivalent in analogue communication."

The Covid inquiry has to navigate the reality that much, even most, communication in government and politics is now digital. The medium changes the way that discussions of all kinds take place. This brings dangers, which Matt Hancock's Covid-era WhatsApps illustrated. Mr Johnson's are unlikely to be less performative or less embarrassing. But it is not Lady Hallett's job to protect him.

Finally, there is Mr Johnson himself. He has now done a U-turn over demands for his papers, going from refusing outright, claiming security is at stake, to saying everything should be handed over. With his future prospects in politics at risk, he is posing for the moment as reasonable and open. But he may not be so forthcoming when he finally gives evidence to Lady Hallett at the end of this year.

Spain

It is in Europe's interests that Pedro Sánchez's election gamble pays off

Spain's socialist prime minister, Pedro Sánchez, has a reputation for judicious risk-taking. In 2018, after orchestrating a vote of no confidence in the incumbent centre-right government, he was appointed prime minister despite the socialists having a mere 84 MPs in a 350-seat parliament. Mr Sánchez was not even a sitting deputy at the time.

This July, progressives both inside and outside Spain must hope that the prime minister's gambling instincts will pay off once again. Following regional and municipal polls in which the centre-right Partido Popular (PP) had a field day, and the radical right Vox party doubled its share of the vote, Mr Sánchez has surprised Spain by calling a snap general election on 23 July, anticipating one due in December. This is a manoeuvre that Sir Humphrey in Yes Minister might describe as "brave".

Mr Sánchez has acted swiftly, in part, to concentrate minds in his socialist-led coalition government, which has become increasingly divided and fractious. Amid splits over political tone and a row over a botched reform of sexual consent laws, his deputy prime minister, Yolanda Díaz, has formed a new leftwing alliance, Sumar, to rival Podemos, a junior coalition partner in the government. The two parties now have days to patch up differences and present a united front next month.

Crucially, Mr Sánchez also hopes his gambit will act as a wake-up call to mainstream voters, as the radical right eyes a role in government for the first time since Spain's return to democracy. Since taking over last year, the PP's present leader, Alberto Núñez Feijóo, has successfully harvested votes by dragging his party back to the centre. But last year a PP-Vox administration was controversially formed in Castilla y León - the first time Vox had been allowed into regional government. Following Sunday's polls, the PP will need the party's support to govern in five regions and numerous municipalities. At a national level, the same logic is all but certain to apply in the case of a PP victory. Mr Feijóo has preached moderation, but has so far failed to rule out post-election deals with Vox.

That means that Spain's summer election has important ramifications for Europe as a whole. An overwhelming majority of Spaniards have no desire to see Vox anywhere near power. But recent elections in Italy, Sweden and Finland indicate that authoritarian nationalists, intent on whipping up anti-immigrant sentiment, waging culture wars and rolling back rights for women and minorities, are becoming a feature, not a glitch, in western European polities. Ahead of next year's elections to the European parliament, Italy's prime minister, Giorgia Meloni, hopes to negotiate a broad alliance between the centre-right and radical right. Ms Meloni, along with Hungary's populist prime minister, Viktor Orbán, were swiftly in touch to congratulate Vox after Sunday's results.

Despite its problems, Mr Sánchez's government has a positive economic story to tell, having weathered the energy crisis and inflationary pressures better than most. Relying on the parliamentary support of a hardline Basque nationalist party with historical links to the terror group ETA has proved deeply unpopular. But a snap election has now turned the spotlight on Vox. In the wake of last weekend's unexpectedly heavy defeats across Spain, Mr Sánchez has in effect told voters "be careful what you wish for". That was a gamble. It is very much in Europe's interests that it pays off.



A student fees protest in Westminster
PHOTOGRAPH: GEOFF PUGH/REX/SHUTTERSTOCK

Millennials' thinking on tax ought to be a gamechanger

Gaby Hinsliff



Taxes are the price paid for living in a civilised society. That founding belief in the moral imperative to stump up for the public good lies deep in progressive bones, just as the belief that people should be able to keep more of their own hard-earned cash does for rightwingers. British liberals are so used to arguing that you can't have lovely, Scandinavian-style public services on American-style taxes that most of us could probably do it in our sleep.

Meanwhile, even the embarrassment of being sacked over his own complex tax affairs seemingly hasn't deterred the multimillionaire Tory MP Nadhim Zahawi from solemnly campaigning this week to scrap inheritance tax, on the grounds that taxing the unearned income of rich people's children is supposedly a "spectre that haunts" us all. The battle lines on tax have been so firmly drawn for so long that this week's report by the centre-right thinktank Onward on the political instincts of millennials – the late 20s to early 40s demographic poised to overtake baby boomers as the biggest electoral grouping – landed initially as something of a shock.

Unusually, this generation isn't getting more rightwing as it ages, with only 21% willing to vote Tory at the next election. Yet Onward finds it is also more hostile than average to the idea of government redistributing income (as opposed to people keeping more of their own money) and it prioritises taxes over the social justice it is often thought to be devoted to. Something is going on under the bonnet here that neither Labour nor the Tories are properly addressing, and it's about who genuinely gets a raw deal from the tax system. (Spoiler alert: it's not Nadhim Zahawi.)

If millennial pips are squeaking, that's because, compared with previous generations at the same age – or older people now – many of them really do pay higher marginal tax rates. Or more accurately, they're paying what *feels* like an extra tax.

When Tony Blair first introduced tuition fees in 1998, he made very clear that the system wasn't intended as a graduate tax. But years of tweaking later, it doesn't half feel like one. Graduates from English universities currently begin repaying student loans once they're earning more than £27,295 a year, with 9% of anything over that deducted from pay packets either for 30 years or until they've paid everything off – which for many would be never, given that their debt is growing with a punchy interest rate of RPI (currently 11.4%) plus 3%. (From this August, the repayment threshold drops to £25,000, while the repayment period stretches to 40 years, but with interest charged at RPI.)

> **A 30-year-old who's earning a good salary now just doesn't have the spending power of previous generations on equivalent wages**

Treat it as the tax it has in effect become and, by the end of last year, young graduates faced a marginal rate of 41% for basic rate taxpayers or 51% for higher rate ones. That's on top of everything else millennials struggle with – such as costly childcare and soaring rents and the prospect of never being able to buy a house, plus the same food and fuel inflation everyone is experiencing – and means that, even before housing costs, a 30-year-old earning a theoretically good salary just doesn't have the spending power of previous generations on equivalent wages.

The struggle, as the saying goes, is real: the longing for tax cuts totally understandable. Arguing about whether Keir Starmer should or shouldn't have ditched Labour's promise to scrap tuition fees, meanwhile, now looks way behind the curve. Scrap them for next year's intake and millennials would still be saddled with their old debts, plus the burning resentment of knowing they'd paid more than either previous or future students as a result of being caught up in what would be branded a failed experiment.

Similarly the message of Onward's research isn't just that young people are "shy capitalists", who might vote Tory if only the government built more houses. It's that millennials are a new kind of voter, shaped by very particular economic circumstances, who demand new thinking from the major parties.

The overall trend for taxes isn't going to be downwards any time soon, in an ageing country with a shrinking tax base, public services crying out for repair, and an expensive but unavoidable decarbonisation programme ahead. Bim Afolami, the thoughtful 37-year-old Conservative MP for Hitchin and Harpenden who co-authored the Onward report, argues that the answer is to cut national insurance for the under-40s and hike it for older workers, a bold idea that might be too bold by half for Rishi Sunak. The alternative is taxes on wealth, which the shadow chancellor, Rachel Reeves, has begun edging towards, with commitments to end tax breaks for non-doms and VAT on school fees.

Wealth taxes are also a way of shifting the burden away from under-40s, who are understandably furious that they haven't been able to build up many assets, and on to older people, who have accumulated more by dint of being born at the right time and have previously enjoyed an effective veto on wealth taxes, given their power at the ballot box.

But, as Onward points out, it's millennials who are now the biggest age cohort in just over half of British constituencies. Factor that in, and ideas Ed Miliband tried in vain to popularise in 2015 – such as mansion taxes on houses worth more than £2m – may start to look less electorally toxic, and more simply ahead of their time. The basic progressive case for paying your taxes remains unchanged. It's who, and what, we tax that now must move with the times.



Bruno and Dom's work must go on

Katharine Viner



Forest defenders should not be killed for exposing crimes. Journalists should not be killed for reporting facts. But, one year ago, the Guardian was devastated by the awful news that in the Amazon rainforest, two lives had been taken on the frontline of the battle to protect the planet.

Bruno Araújo Pereira, a renowned defender of the rights of Brazil's Indigenous peoples, and Dom Phillips, an outstanding reporter, long-term Guardian contributor and friend, disappeared while researching a book on how to save the rainforest.

In the weeks that followed, when their bodies were discovered and our worst fears of their deaths confirmed, everyone at the Guardian was horrified. And from that horror was born a determination to continue the work they were doing, covering what our global environment writer, Jonathan Watts, has called "the global war against nature". Yesterday, we launched the Bruno and Dom project, a year-long collaborative investigation coordinated by Forbidden Stories that involves more than 50 journalists from 16 media organisations in 10 countries around the world.

Together, we have worked with three aims in mind. First, to honour and pursue the work of Bruno and Dom. Bruno was totally committed to the traditional peoples of the Amazon and defending their ways of life, and Dom's brave and humane journalism did so much to bring the stories of Brazil and Latin America to a global audience. We have picked up the threads of their unfinished stories, chased down leads and tried to carry on doing what they can no longer do.

Second, to remind everyone of the beauty, importance and fragility of the Amazon. Watts, who moved to the rainforest in 2021 and is the Guardian's first journalist to be permanently based there, has written about it being the heart of the world - "not the lungs, as is often mistakenly claimed". But now it beats much less strongly than it did, and than it must, if human beings on this planet are to have a future.

Third, to suggest ideas for how to save the Amazon, and, in time, inspire positive change. This was a central focus in all of Dom's work, and something that much Guardian journalism strives for.

The Bruno and Dom project, over four days of publishing, will include the latest in the criminal investigation into their deaths, with the perspective of friends and family. Three men are currently being held in prison, and police have named a fourth as the alleged mastermind, while the former head of Brazil's Indigenous protection agency under President Jair Bolsonaro has been charged on the basis that he ignored warnings over the risk of bloodshed in the Javari valley.

> **We have picked up the threads of their stories and carried on doing what they can no longer do**

The project will also feature the last photographs taken of Bruno and Dom before they were killed and analyse what they tell us; a wider exploration of how organised crime - including illegal fishing, hunting, logging and mining - is taking over the Amazon; an investigation into the global companies making billions from extracting raw materials from the rainforest, including how beef is eating up the Amazon, and the extent of deforestation; and a detailed analysis of solutions for saving the rainforest.

The Guardian and Forbidden Stories, an international consortium of investigative journalists that pursues the work of assassinated journalists or those under threat, know only too well that what happened to Bruno and Dom is not an isolated crime. At least 67 journalists and media workers were killed in 2022, according to the Committee to Protect Journalists, while Global Witness has found that three people are killed every week trying to protect their land from extractive forces - with Brazil being one of the deadliest countries in the world for land and environmental defenders, many of them from Indigenous communities.

We hope you will read, reflect on and share the Bruno and Dom project, with the spirit of defiance that has inspired it. The work must go on.

*
Katharine Viner *is the editor-in-chief of the Guardian*

Established 1906

Country diary

Chelsea flower show, London

The bench where I'm sitting, a naturally curved slab of beech, smells of teak oil and fresh wood. On the table in front of me are two earthenware pots in a rich warm chocolate brown glaze. Spilling from them are glaucous echeverias, their succulent leaves like plump sugared almonds. There's the sweet lemon scent of *Elaeagnus* "quicksilver", small yellow flowers tucked among silver willowy leaves. I feel hidden away in a quiet corner of a country garden, but the strident calls of ring-necked parakeets bring me back to London.

This is the Chelsea flower show and the Nurture Landscapes garden designed by Sarah Price, one of the 12 main show gardens this year. It's inspired by the plants and the spirit of Benton End, the 16th-century manor house in Suffolk where the artist and gardener Cedric Morris lived. Benton End was a hub of creative freedom, with Lucian Freud, Francis Bacon and Paul Nash among Morris's liberal circle. It was there that he experimented with breeding bearded irises in unusual sultry colours.

The house and garden, now gifted to the Garden Museum, are being revived as a place of art and horticulture. But here in Chelsea, Sarah's garden is celebrating plants that Cedric collected on his winter travels. His Sicilian sweet pea, handed from gardener to gardener before returning to Benton End, is flowering against terracotta and ochre walls; walls where Sarah laid washes of plant-based paint over reclaimed canvases. Straw-cob walls are coated in lime render mixed with brick dust and sharp sand. I feel enveloped in their honey glow as the hubbub of the show recedes.

Splayed against them, casting a delicate shadow, is *Rosa mutabilis,* where a white-tailed bumblebee feeds. There's tumbling wisteria, tall angelica, corydalis and ferns, native quaking grasses and wood melick. Purple black aeoniums rise from sandy planters made from reclaimed materials, textured like oaty biscuits. Apricot alliums grow through gritty gravel and two pruned Scots pines give a Mediterranean feel.

I'm thinking how the effect is wild, exuberant and yet subtle, revelling in innovation and craft, when a brimstone moth dashes through the stippled space in a sudden flash of vivid lemon.
Susie White

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It's easier to claim Covid is over than face reality

John Harris is right (The Tories can't admit that we're still reeling from the pandemic, 29 May). It's as though the pandemic never happened. The long-term effects that it has had on our and our children's mental and physical health, our NHS, our public services, as well as the global economy, have been swept under the carpet. "Don't mention the virus" has become the guiding mantra of our media and our politicians.

The past is being erased. The present is being ignored. Even though the pandemic is still with us, all protections, surveillance and data collections have been dismantled. Those millions still at the highest risk are reporting being told to take their masks off in hospitals. The roughly quarter of a million people who died from Covid are no longer even a number.

Let us hope that the independent inquiry doesn't just become about Partygate, or even Cronygate. We owe it to the dead and those who are still dying (nearly 300 a week, according to statistics from the end of April) to learn the lessons of such a traumatic and long-lasting period in all our lives, recognise that Covid is still with us, and ensure that we are prepared for any future pandemics.
Joan Twelves
Covid Action campaign, London

● John Harris makes some important points about Covid. However, the silence around preventable deaths needs further scrutiny. Between March 2020 and January 2021, there were 233 UK government press briefings, prime ministerial addresses, NHS data briefings and Covid-19 taskforce briefings. As 2021 progressed, even as known cases were in the hundreds of thousands and deaths continued to proliferate, these briefings noticeably dwindled. The final press briefing was held on 21 February 2022. In effect, the state fell silent over Covid.

The public were pushed towards a sanitised space where there was little or no discussion about the dead, who they were, how they lived, how they died and, crucially, how many of their deaths were preventable. If the choices that the government makes result in a catastrophic number of preventable deaths, then the logical path to follow is to quieten, subdue and silence discussion about the dead, and deflect attention about who is accountable. Shamefully, that is what has happened, and is happening, in England and Wales right now.
Emeritus professor Joe Sim
Liverpool John Moores University
Emeritus professor Steve Tombs
Open University

● My husband, old but up to then very fit and feisty, caught Covid somehow in mid-December last year in spite of five vaccinations, after delayed but successful treatment for a fall in our kitchen. In the crisis, unbelievably to us both, we could simply get no help until 28 December, by which time he was at death's door. He was then treated and recovered to some extent, but died of the aftereffects on 7 March in an overstretched, understaffed, claustrophobic ward.

His last words, I'm sorry to say, were not something to treasure, but a furious "Get me out of here." I registered his death at the town hall, and found that Covid was not mentioned on the certificate – I was too exhausted to argue.

But my husband read history at Emmanuel College, Cambridge, and would regard this as a small example of corruption of historical sources. Because I saw every step, I know that Covid, and the resulting NHS crisis, were among the causes of his death. I must be one of many who believe that their relative's individual piece of historical evidence has been falsified to make the figures look less dire.
Name and address supplied

Making sure our public inquiries get results

Diana Johnson (Letters, 31 May) is right to be concerned that too many public inquiries have little impact because there is no mechanism to follow up on their recommendations. When I chaired the Soham inquiry I included a recommendation that the government should report back to parliament six months after publication on progress made.

That was agreed by the then home secretary. As a result, ministers and the civil service were more diligent in ensuring that action was taken as they knew they would be held to account. Since then, select committees have become much more effective and could usefully take on the task of revisiting inquiry recommendations after six months. At the moment, too many inquiries take too long and are quickly consigned to history. We need a more rigorous system of accountability.
Michael Bichard
Crossbench peer, House of Lords

● Simon Jenkins' criticism of Lady Hallett's inquiry in light of Sweden completing its pandemic report (theguardian.com, 30 May) is a comparison of chalk and cheese. Far from perfect, Sweden has a government with vestiges of integrity. We are blessed with something different – ministers who made some bad decisions, MPs who sought cash for chums and other gratifications in the "opportunities" afforded by Covid.

This government would be delighted to have an investigation done and dusted so that it can better showcase its pre-election agenda of demonising "boat people", portraying sick and disabled people as a burden on the state, and rebranding long Covid as a disease of the feckless.

Lady Hallett does not wish to be remembered for a whitewash. If her inquiry needs time, we need to be patient.
Graham Murphy
Liverpool

Fund the services that support rape victims

The article about rape complainants dropping out of the justice system (Nearly 70% of complainants in rape cases withdraw from justice system, 31 May) rightly sets out the appalling difficulties in pursuing prosecution, and the Labour party's proposed solution to offer free legal advice. All this is good and right, but it fails to mention one patchily provided service to assist people attempting to achieve justice when they have experienced sexual violence. These are independent sexual violence advisers (ISVAs).

The charity of which I am a trustee delivers an ISVA service that provides advice and support throughout disclosure to police, contacts with the Crown Prosecution Service and attendance at court. We believe that many people who may withdraw from the justice system are able to stay the course with our support. However, funding is nowhere nearly sufficient and is often for limited time periods. Delays in the justice system have further burdened this service.

We would advocate that reliable and sufficient funding for ISVAs could make a positive impact on complainants' experiences and willingness to persist with prosecutions.
Sally Plumb
Rape & Sexual Violence Project

Corrections and clarifications

● **A map of Turkey's presidential runoff results had the wrong legend. Yellow areas were won by Recep Tayyip Erdoğan and blue areas by Kemal Kılıçdaroğlu (Turkish lira falls to new low as Erdoğan strikes hawkish tone in victory, 30 May, p19).**

● **The UK's 2019 election was described as "the first winter general election … since 1923". This overlooked the election in February 1974 ('Social mobility is a fairytale', 29 May, G2, p6).**

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We need the return of Miliband the elder

The wisdom and honesty of David Miliband at the Hay festival (Miliband says he regrets backing war, 29 May) shows how much he is needed in frontline politics now, and why Labour missed a trick in not appointing him leader all those years ago. What might persuade him back, I wonder.
Simon Surtees
London

● Your headline online "Why are millennials so turned off by the Tory party?" (30 May) puzzled me. Surely it should read: "Why isn't everyone turned off by the Tory party?"
Steve Hodgson
Ambergate, Derbyshire

● I was pleased to read about the Italian chapel on Orkney (Letters, 27 May). When we visited it some years ago, a group barged their way past us. One of them produced a tuning fork, struck it and started singing. It turned out that they were descendants of the builders on a regular visit. It was one of the highlights of our holiday.
Nova Brockbank
Newcastle upon Tyne

● Re Christine Fuchs' letter on the Chelsea flower show being costly and elitist (31 May), I couldn't agree more. Having had the same experience in 2021 at Tatton Park, Cheshire, I would never attend another such event. It's enough to put me off gardening for life.
Pat Fahy
Liverpool

● May I recommend that Christine Fuchs visits the RHS Malvern Spring Festival next year. It's less grand than Chelsea and therein lies its charm. The show gardens by local schools are a particular delight, and the location beneath the Malvern Hills is stunning.
Nigel Walsh
Exeter



Pete Brown

Poet, musician and co-writer of some of Cream's greatest hits including I Feel Free and Sunshine of Your Love

The poet and musician Pete Brown, who has died aged 82, made a unique contribution to the world of British rock and blues when he began working alongside Jack Bruce, the singer of Cream, to write lyrics for the supergroup in the mid-1960s. He co-wrote some of their greatest hits, including White Room, I Feel Free, Politician and Sunshine of Your Love.

Despite being an established poet on the London beat and jazz circuit at the time, Pete himself was somewhat bemused by Cream's reliance on his work. "I used to wonder, 'Why on earth do they need me?'" However, he conceded, "I suppose I did have that chemistry with Jack. I was always on the spot and most songs, like Sunshine of Your Love, were written very quickly."

Before working with the band, Pete had a weekly residency at the Marquee Club in London with his group the First Real Poetry Band, which involved him reciting his poetry to the backing of a jazz quartet, which included the guitarist John McLaughlin.

He also collaborated with the poet Michael Horovitz, culminating in a recital together at a 1965 event at the Royal Albert Hall. Pete confessed that during this period he became heavily involved in drink and drugs.

When I interviewed him for my book Cream, the Legendary Sixties Supergroup (2000), Pete told me: "During the early 60s I was busy being a beatnik and living in a slum. That's when I met Ginger Baker, Graham Bond [organist and bandleader of the British R&B group the Graham Bond Organisation] and Jack.





Brown performing in 2001, above; with his band Piblokto! in 1970, right; and, above right, the original lyrics for White Room, 1968
AVALON/GETTY IMAGES; JORGEN ANGEL/REDFERNS; RAY TANG/SHUTTERSTOCK;

> **He was really the fourth member of Cream who didn't always get the recognition he deserved**

"One day I got a phone call from Ginger asking me to a recording studio in Chalk Farm. Cream had written a song and needed some lyrics. It was as simple as that."

However, it was Bruce who asked Pete if he could write lyrics for a song they were recording called Wrapping Paper. It was their debut single, released in 1966, but proved a disappointment. "It was filled with too many conflicting images."

But, as he eschewed the drug-taking lifestyle, Pete's lyrics for I Feel Free (1966) summed up his return to normality. The single, Cream's second, was the band's first Top 20 hit, reaching No 11 on the UK chart in early 1967.

White Room, from the band's third album, Wheels of Fire (1968), was based on an "awful time in a small white painted room in Baker Street, next to a fire station where the alarms kept going off just when I was having a nasty trip and started talking to the furniture. The song began as an eight-page poem and was about going through serious changes and starting life again." The track opens:

*In the white room with black
curtains near the station
Black roof country, no gold
pavements, tired starlings
Silver horses ran down moonbeams
in your dark eyes*

Dave "Clem" Clempson, a guitarist with Colosseum and Humble Pie who in recent years played in a band with Pete, said: "Pete's lyrics were a big part of the reason I loved [Cream's] music so much. Sunshine of Your Love is one of the great rock riffs of all time. But it was Pete's lyric that elevated it to something really special."

Based on a Jimi Hendrix riff, and from the bestselling second album Disraeli Gears (1967), Sunshine of Your Love reached No 5 on the US Billboard chart.

"He was really the fourth member of Cream who didn't always get the recognition that he deserved," said Clempson.

Born in Ashtead, Surrey, Pete was the son of Nathan Leibowitz, a shoe salesman, and Kitty (nee Cohen), a secretary. Originally from Hendon, north-west London, they had changed their surname to Brown to avoid antisemitism and moved to Surrey to escape the blitz, but returned to Hendon in 1951.

Pete attended the Orthodox Jewish Hasmonean grammar school, which he hated. He was expelled aged 14, allegedly for burning down the art room, which he always denied.

In 1958 he spent nine months studying journalism at Regent Street Polytechnic (now part of the University of Westminster), but began writing poetry, partly because, Pete told me: "I couldn't do anything else. I'd been writing

since I was 14 and had my first stuff published at 18. Inspired by the American beat poets, I went out doing poetry readings to earn 20 quid a week."

In 1960 he met Horovitz, and they began the travelling arts group New Departures that comprised poets and jazz musicians. He also jammed with members of the Graham Bond Organisation before becoming involved with Cream.

Pete never went on the road with the supergroup, because his previously heavy drug use led to him having anxiety and panic attacks – "the loud music used to frighten me".

Eric Clapton had joined Cream in 1966, but Brown worked primarily with Bruce, and continued to work with him after the band broke up in 1968, writing lyrics for his solo work up until his 2014 album Silver Rails. His relations with Baker were more fractious. According to Pete: "Ginger Baker was unhappy about the split [of the royalties]. He was always bitter and thought there was a conspiracy between me and Jack, but that was absolutely untrue."

Pete went on to form his own band, the Battered Ornaments; he was fired by his fellow members just before they were about to play on the bill with the Rolling Stones at their 1969 free concert in Hyde Park, in front of 250,000 people, because of his "terrible singing", according to Pete.

Undeterred, he formed a new band, Piblokto!, which released two albums before it broke up in 1971. He began a new project with Bond, producing the album Two Heads Are Better Than One, but Bond left in 1973 to form Magus.

With the arrival of punk, Pete quit the rock scene and took singing lessons. "Before that I relied on arrogance and fear." He also wrote a film script and scores for the BBC with his fellow Piblokto! band member, the keyboardist Phil Ryan. The pair continued to make music together, touring and releasing three albums, the last, Road of Cobras, in 2010.

That year Pete published an autobiography, White Rooms & Imaginary Westerns, and in 2016, his first book of poetry in decades, Mundane Tuesday and Freudian Saturday.

Just days before he died, he finished recording tracks for his final album, Shadow Club, with a band including Clempson and Malcolm Bruce (Jack's son). There is also a guest appearance by Clapton on the record, due for release in September this year.

Pete is survived by his wife, Sheridan MacDonald, an actor, whom he married in 2007, a daughter, Jessica, from a previous relationship, a stepson, Tad, and a grandson, Roko.

Chris Welch

Peter Ronald Brown, poet and musician, born 25 December 1940; died 19 May 2023

Rod Kedward

Historian who brought to light the role of rural communities in the French resistance during the second world war

Through his books Resistance in Vichy France (1978), In Search of the Maquis (1993) and The French Resistance and Its Legacy (2022), the historian Rod Kedward, who has died aged 86, transformed understanding of rural France under Nazi occupation during the second world war. His general history, La Vie en Bleu: France and the French Since 1900 (2005), also attracted a wide readership and the conferences he organised in 1984 and 1994 at the University of Sussex on resistance and liberation in France turbocharged the field.

Kedward's interest in "history from below" – as experienced by ordinary individuals rather than governments or leaders – prompted his decision in the 1970s to work on the grassroots of resistance and conduct interviews with witnesses. It was a bold move. French colleagues warned of the possibility of fabrication and fantasy. Nonetheless he was determined to talk to witnesses from the time. This was not just to allow them to have their own voice, but also to use oral history to inform his approach to the archival evidence.

Previous historians of the period had tended to focus on urban resistance and to assume that rural areas adhered to the regime of the collaborationist Vichy government of Philippe Pétain and supported Pétainist policies that valued farming and a return to agriculture. Kedward's work showed that there was good evidence of a resistance culture in the countryside.

Drawing on "carnival" theory from anthropology (which examines how established order can be turned upside down) – Kedward showed how the maquis (the bands of rural resisters) subverted the Vichy rule of law in the name of higher justice, to create an "outlaw culture".

In The French Resistance and Its Legacy, for instance, he relates a "test" in resistance technique that he had to undergo in 1972 before being allowed to interview the resister Louis de la Bardonnie: "He made me steal a notice from the outside wall of a local police station before he would agree to talk,



Kedward's interest in 'history from below' prompted his decision in the 1970s to work on the grassroots of resistance

and then he made me put it back."

Oral histories revealed a wide variety of motivations and levels of engagement in resistance depending on location, culture and individual experience. Kedward's research on southern France drew attention to tradition and folklore as sources of inspiration. Resisters in the Cévennes, for instance, linked their commitment to the 18th-century Camisard revolt against Louis XIV's repression of Protestants, while in the neighbouring department of the Aude, they were motivated by the Cathar heretics of the Middle Ages.

Kedward also highlighted how women used traditional gender roles to disguise their resistance activities. Their ruse to distribute clandestine publications or transport weapons in shopping bags and children's prams was so effective that they escaped notice both at the time and by historians subsequently. Observations of women's behaviour in interview led Kedward to discover how "the women at the doorway" had acted to distract and mislead, covering for a husband or accomplice.

Born in Hawkhurst, Kent, Rod was the younger son of the Rev Neville Kedward, a Methodist minister, and Nancy (nee Judge), a drama teacher. He was educated at Kingswood school in Bath, and studied history at Worcester College, Oxford. As a postgraduate student at St Antony's College, he moved into French history and France became his preferred



destination for holidays and sabbaticals. His love of France marks all his work.

In 1962, the historian Asa Briggs, vice-chancellor of the University of Sussex, invited Kedward to join what was the first of the new universities as lecturer. He thrived on the excitement of this new, "plate-glass" interdisciplinary university just outside Brighton, which caught the momentum of the 60s. He frequently borrowed models from literary and film studies, anthropology and sociology, and his writing illuminates how history can benefit from this cross-fertilisation of disciplines. He remained at Sussex, promoted to professor of history in 1991, until his retirement in 2002.

Generous with his time, Kedward offered encouragement to generations of scholars. He was a charismatic and engaging speaker, whose students would applaud his lectures. Colleagues and former students became firm friends.

An active Labour party member with anarchist sympathies, Kedward campaigned against repression of all kinds. In the early 70s, he wrote for the alternative newspaper Brighton Voice, about issues including squatting, anti-racism, individual rights and tenants' protests. In 1973-74, he participated in the Larzac farmers' battle against the extension of a military base in south-west France, and supported the movement to recognise the Occitan language of southern France and its border region.

Unusually for a British historian of France, Kedward's work was translated and admired by the French. In 1994, In Search of the Maquis was awarded the Philippe Viannay prize for an outstanding contribution to the history of resistance and, in 2011, he was made a commandeur dans l'Ordre des Palmes Académiques for services to French culture.

In 2014, Kedward realised his ambition to link the French resistance to other resistance organisations, such as the civil rights movement, the anti-apartheid movement and dissidence in communist eastern Europe, with the creation of the Archive of Resistance Testimony at Sussex University. This has taken on a particular relevance since the outbreak of the war in Ukraine. Kedward was also prominent in the Secret World War Two Learning Network, which commemorates British heroes of the Special Operations Executive.

Family was central to Kedward's life. In 1965, he married Carol Wimbleton, who survives him, along with their children, Josh and Jess, and grandchildren, Isabella, Niamh, Lucien and Rufus.

Hanna Diamond

Harry Roderick Kedward, historian, born 26 March 1937; died 29 April 2023

Birthdays

Carlos Acosta, ballet dancer, 50; **Sergio Agüero**, footballer, 35; **Kevin Brownlow**, film historian and director, 85; **Michael Clark**, dancer and choreographer, 61; **Dominic Cooper**, actor, 45; **Jon Culshaw**, impressionist, 55; **Sir Mark Elder**, music director, the Hallé Orchestra, 76; **Dave 'Boy' Green**, boxer, 70; **Tony Hadley**, singer, 63; **Lasse Hallström**, film director, 77; **The Right Rev Lord (Richard) Harries of Pentregarth**, former bishop of Oxford, 87; **Prof Robert Hewison**, cultural historian and theatre critic, 80; **Prof Dame Rosalyn Higgins**, former president, international court of justice, 86; **Sir Richard Long**, sculptor, 78; **Helen Oxenbury**, writer and illustrator, 85; **Lord (George) Penrose**, judge and former senator, Scottish College of Justice, 85; **Tim Rice-Oxley**, musician and songwriter, 47; **Craig Stadler**, golfer, 70; **Jamie Wallis**, Conservative MP, 39; **Abby Wambach**, footballer, 43; **Mark Waugh**, cricketer, 58; **Steve Waugh**, cricketer, 58; **Nadhim Zahawi**, Conservative MP and former minister, 56.

Puzzles

Yesterday's solutions

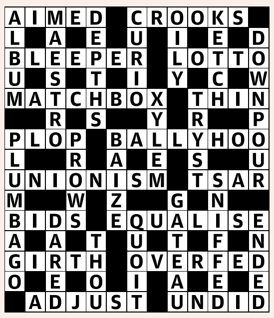
Killer sudoku
Easy

6	4	7	5	1	2	8	3	9
1	5	2	3	9	8	7	6	4
9	3	8	7	6	4	5	2	1
7	1	6	9	2	5	3	4	8
3	2	5	4	8	6	9	1	7
4	8	9	1	7	3	6	5	2
2	9	1	6	3	7	4	8	5
5	7	3	8	4	1	2	9	6
8	6	4	2	5	9	1	7	3

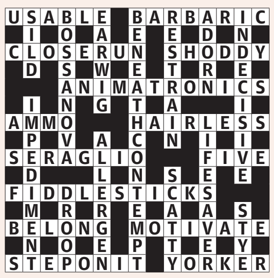
Medium

6	4	7	2	8	1	3	9	5
3	8	1	9	5	7	6	2	4
2	9	5	6	3	4	1	8	7
1	2	6	3	4	8	7	5	9
7	5	4	1	9	2	8	3	6
9	3	8	7	6	5	4	1	2
4	1	2	5	7	3	9	6	8
8	6	3	4	2	9	5	7	1
5	7	9	8	1	6	2	4	3

Codeword



Cryptic crossword
Solution No. 29,085

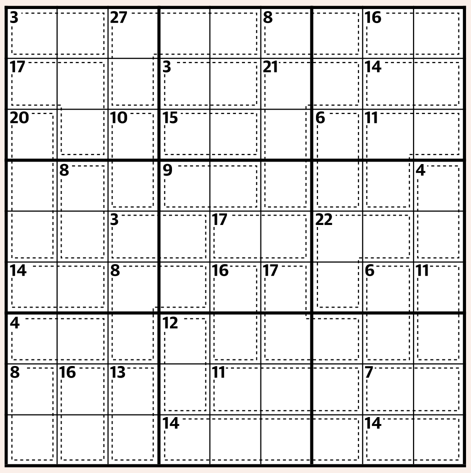


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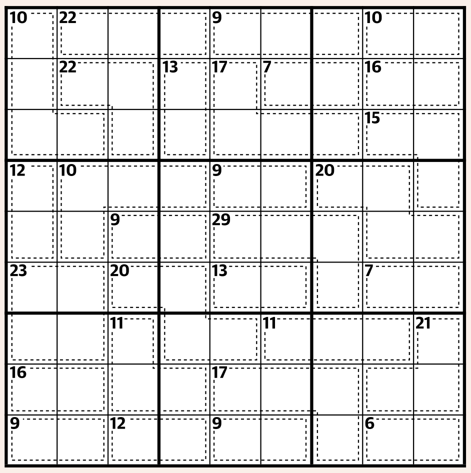
Killer sudoku

Easy

The normal rules of sudoku apply: fill each row, column and 3x3 box with all the numbers from 1 to 9. In addition, the digits in each inner shape (marked by dots) must add up to the number in the top corner of that box. No digit can be repeated within an inner shape.

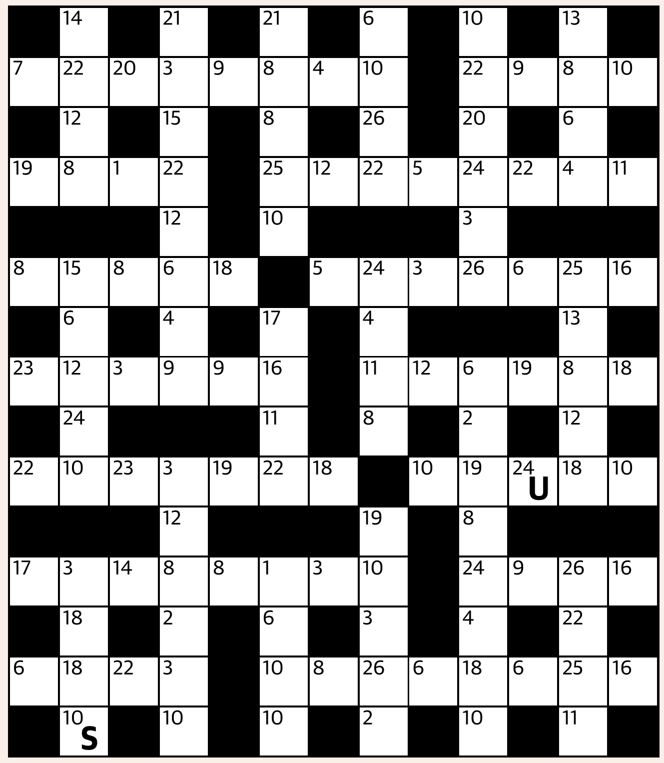


Medium



Codeword

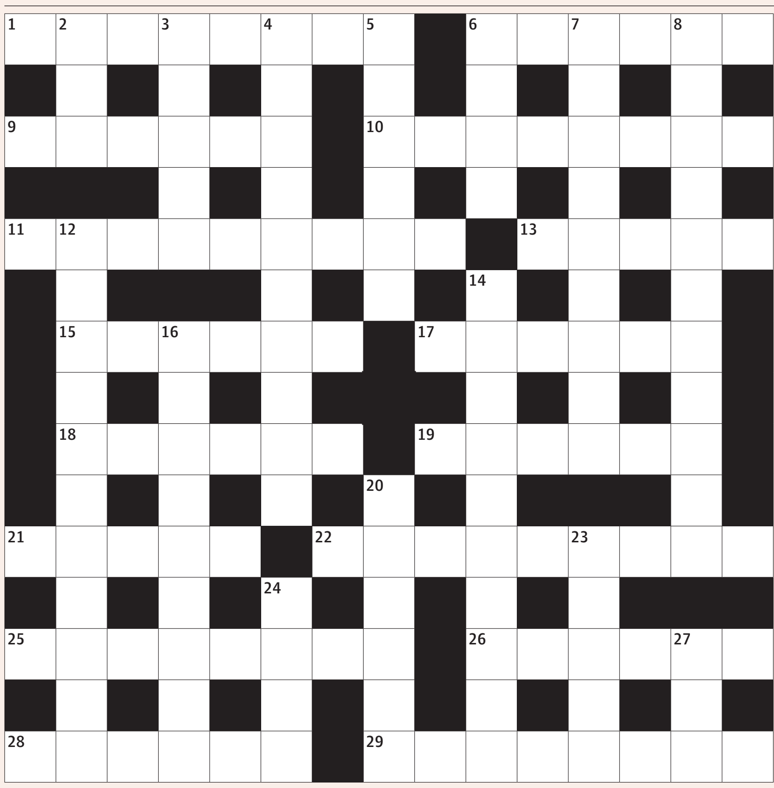
Each letter of the alphabet makes at least one appearance in the grid, and is represented by the same number wherever it appears. The letters decoded should help you to identify other letters and words in the grid.



A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R ~~S~~ T ~~U~~ V W X Y Z

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10 S	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24 U	25	26

Guardian cryptic crossword No 29,086 set by Qaos



Across

1 Memorial day, you intended to say (8)
6 Attacks oil company gaining the last in profits (6)
9 Just during the weekend game of rugby (6)
10 Issue action on the internet? (8)
11 Britain's unfortunately long used to strikes (9)
13 Different? Or what two relations have in common (5)
15 Courage felt to be shown in recession (6)
17 United breaking out of position (6)
18 Certainly join forces again? (6)
19 Hold new Lemsip at first to stop runny nose (6)
21 Stories from Johannesburg's exciting event? (5)
22 Everyone's powers drop 25% with abnormal reactions (9)
25 Ruler once capturing Major without volunteers (4,4)
26 Settle² (6)
28 Answer back communist to get caught (6)
29 Large cab carrying 500 east (8)

Down

2 Rising opera company produces single (3)
3 Writer dipping into funds occasionally for turnover? (5)
4 Flower in field regularly surrounded by wind (6,4)
5 Final song by Jim Morrison's group? (3,3)
6 Send head of security in (4)
7 Festival buys Glastonbury ultimately with master's payment plan (4,5)
8 Flying solo over Spain to transfer money (5,6)
12 A believer in free will is an irritable fool! (11)
14 Supervisor's requirement to play bridge, say? (10)
16 Rising artist's skill covering wrong flag in battle (9)
20 Top six in Premier League, including Newcastle, thank home support (6)
23 Sticks with muscles, not bone (5)
24 £100000500 ain't bad! (4)
27 Peculiar drink (3)

Ooh! Aah! Rock star!

Football icon Eric Cantona is back – as a Serge Gainsbourg-style troubadour
Interview by Simon Hattenstone



The Guardian
G2
Friday 02/06/23

Film & Music

Back in black
Foo Fighters' punchy album
page 9

Uncut gems
Elizabeth Taylor films – ranked
page 2



Ranked! Elizabeth Taylor films

As the epic Cleopatra – the highest-grossing film of 1963 – turns 60, Anne Billson picks the best of the screen queen's movies



1
Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf? *(1966)*
The Liz Taylor and Richard Burton Show reaches its apotheosis, as drunken campus couple Martha and George go at it hammer and tongs in Mike Nichols' debut, adapted from the Edward Albee drama. Like many films of prestigious stage plays, it involves a lot of telling and very little showing, but this hits the spot thanks to cracking chemistry between the two leads and Taylor's endearing attempt to look drab (pictured), which won her a second Oscar.

2
BUtterfield 8 *(1960)*
Movie-star masterclass alert, as Taylor's callgirl, Gloria Wondrous, wakes up in her married lover's apartment, brushes her teeth with bourbon and scrawls in lipstick on the mirror. Taylor is on Oscar-winning form in this deliciously sleazy adaptation of John O'Hara's novel.

3
Reflections in a Golden Eye *(1967)*
Taylor is cast as a sensuous broad married to a repressed homosexual – Marlon Brando as an army major obsessed with a soldier who likes to ride horses naked. John Huston's ripe slice of southern gothic features Brando getting his face whipped by Liz, decked out like a Greek goddess in white gown and updo.

4
A Place in the Sun *(1951)*
It's hard not to sympathise with Montgomery Clift's factory worker when he falls for Taylor's radiant socialite, at least until he tries to dump his pregnant girlfriend for her. George Stevens' film of Theodore Dreiser's An American Tragedy now feels dated, but Taylor and Montgomery, who became close friends, share sizzling onscreen chemistry.



5
The Sandpiper *(1965)*
Liz lets her hair down as a boho painter who lives in a shack at Big Sur in this romantic drama with a famous theme tune. As an unapologetic single mother in retreat from society, she must have seemed radical for 1960s Hollywood. Naturally, she is temptation incarnate for the married headteacher of a boys' school. No prizes for guessing which actor plays him!



6
The Driver's Seat *(1974)*
Taylor's oddball 1970s films, when her buxotic beauty and star persona were out of step with prevailing trends, are often more interesting than the hits of her early heyday. This Italian adaptation of Muriel Stark's novel, about a spinster in search of her own murderer, is as uncanny and unsettling as its source material.

7
Suddenly, Last Summer *(1959)*
Like most Tennessee Williams adaptations, this is too talky to be truly shocking, but it's still a tasty morsel of southern gothic. Katharine Hepburn wants Dr Montgomery Clift to perform a lobotomy on her traumatised niece (Taylor) to prevent her from spilling the beans about her cousin's lurid death.

8
Secret Ceremony *(1968)*
After Boom!, director Joseph Losey reteamed with Taylor for their second arthouse flop of 1968, a gothicky melodrama rescued by its stars. She plays a sex worker sequestered as a surrogate mother to a disturbed young woman (Mia Farrow). Their weird idyll is disrupted when Robert Mitchum rolls up as Farrow's creepy uncle.



9
Boom! *(1968)*
Taylor is too young for her role as a dying dowager with tons of jewellery (some of it Liz's own), and Richard Burton too old as the drifter who washes up at her Mediterranean island mansion. But check out that kabuki headdress, and Noël Coward as "The Witch of Capri"!



10
The Mirror Crack'd *(1980)*
Liz Taylor tops the all-star cast of the Agatha Christie whodunit as a Hollywood has-been filming a historical film in an English village, circa 1950s. But someone's trying to poison her! Could it be bitchy rival Kim Novak? A sprained ankle can't stop Miss Marple (Angela Lansbury) from investigating. Splendid stuff.

See full list of 20 at theguardian.com/film

Playlist



1 **Silvana Estrada**
Milagro y Desastre
The Mexican songwriter has a voice like a soft summer morning: fluttering, full of life – and buoyed here by soft keys, elegant strings and lapping percussion.

2 **Baby Keem and Kendrick Lamar**
The Hillbillies
Currently the best double act in rap, the cousins return, going back and forth line-by-line in a richly enjoyable exchange over a nimble beat and a Bon Iver sample.

3 **CMAT**
Have Fun!
A fiddle-flecked, rollicking piano ramble on the perils of being messed around when you're eager as an unfed hen: the Irish country star is funny, characterful and sneakily bitter.

4 **Be Your Own Pet**
Worship the Whip
The 2000s Nashville teen punks retain their bratty energy for a superb comeback with more adult concerns, namely the US's creeping authoritarianism: "Lick it up, baby," Jemina Pearl sneers.

5 **Blonde Redhead**
Snowman
One of alt-rock's most beguiling and beautiful bands are set to release their first album in a decade – this initial single revives their brand of melancholy in a hypnotic two-chord ballad.

6 **Joanna Sternberg**
People Are Toys to You
There are shades of Daniel Johnston's naive-yet-steadfast demeanour to this song by the NYC singer-songwriter, upbraiding a toxic partner in their distinctive feline tones.

7 **Gunn Truscinski Nace**
On Lamp
Bill Nace (of Body/Head) joins the established Steve Gunn and John Truscinski partnership for this wistful bit of guitar ambience that shivers and shudders with the threat of menace.

PHOTOGRAPH: GAMMA-RAPHO/GETTY IMAGES
COVER: PÅL HANSEN/THE GUARDIAN

The reader interview
‘At the heart of what I do is punk’

Singer-songwriter **Lucinda Williams** on problematic favourites, Tom Petty’s kindness and her recovery from a stroke


PHOTOGRAPH: DANNY CLINCH

Which of your tracks are you most proud of? *axolotly*
I really like Bus to Baton Rouge: the lyrics, the recording, the way it came about. I was thinking about the house my mother’s parents lived in. My grandfather was a Methodist preacher and I remember the way my grandmother would throw the coffee grounds into the garden. She made the best banana pudding. There’s a little darkness in there, too. “The sweet honeysuckle that grew all around / Were switches when we were bad” is about the narrow branches they’d use to whip us. We were told: “Pick a switch, child”, and you’d have to go into the garden and pick your instrument of torture.

Your 1988 eponymous album was released by British label Rough Trade, whose other albums at the time were by the likes of Easterhouse, Band of Holy Joy, the Smiths and the Woodentops. How did it feel being a country singer in such company? *VerulamiumParkRanger*
I didn’t get the chance to meet the Pixies or any of those bands, but at the heart of what I do is rock’n’roll and punk. I had a very different experience on a major label. I told one guy I wanted the producer who did Bob Dylan’s Blonde on Blonde and he went: “Is Blonde on Blonde a band?” I hated the way they made my music sound. I went to one guy’s office in Beverly Hills and he was jumping up and down in his Gucci shoes going: “It sounds so good!” And I’m sitting there going: “It sucks. I hate it.”

Do you have any favourite memories of Tom Petty? *Stozzlar*
He was always very concerned with how I was doing and feeling. He took me on tour with him in the 90s. The audiences didn’t know me and people would be sitting there with their arms folded, waiting for Tom. Tom saw this so one night he came out on stage, took the mic and said: “I want you to listen to this next artist because she’s really good. You need to pay attention.” It was just so heartwarming and moving, because nobody ever does that. I had no idea he was going to do it and it says everything about him.

Your forthright memoir Don’t Tell Anybody the Secrets I Told You is a compelling read. What was it like to write? *VerulamiumParkRanger*
Like writing a journal but where you don’t have to hold back, although I didn’t want to offend anyone. There goes my punk reputation! At first I thought I’d have to wait until everyone in it had died. I didn’t want to cause rifts. Like my old guitar player Gurf Morlix … we fell out during the making of Car Wheels. He’s told me “That’s not how it was”, but won’t tell me why he got upset. I assume it’s because I brought Steve [Earle] in, but I love the guy and we made some great music together. Bands can get very heated. You almost need a therapist!

Is your track Changed the Locks based on reality? *axolotly*
I was enjoying using those metaphors for: stay away and I’m gonna change the locks. You can’t come in and I’m gonna change the way I dress, change the car I drive, change the name of this town. You feel like you’ll just do anything to avoid running into this person. I’m sure I was thinking of a real person, but I wasn’t actually gonna do all those things.

> **At my grandparents’ we’d have to go out into the garden and pick the branch they’d whip us with**

Do you think the landscape for women in country music has changed since you started in the industry? *Aimsnz2000*
Maybe there’s more attention paid to women artists now. I don’t have to deal with what a woman in the corporate world probably has to. You know, I probably get paid the same for a show as Steve Earle. I think everyday sexism has lessened, or I’m more used to it. But I don’t get the comments I got when I started out, like: “You’re pretty good for a chick.”

What did you think of the Vic Chesnutt song named after you? *troyka*
I thought it was charming and clever. It’s an honour. I was surprised he did that, but it was very sweet. He could come across as very gravelly or edgy when you met him, because he’d be in his wheelchair and he didn’t want people to feel sorry for him. The first time I met him he spun round and out came this flurry of obscenities. “This motherfucking, cocksucking …” you know. But somehow he connected with me and my music. I loved Vic and was heartbroken when he left us [in 2009].

Your dad was an expert on [1940s-60s American novelist] Flannery O’Connor and her influence is evident on many of your songs. Her variety of southern gothic is a glorious portrayal of “old weird America”, but in these days of #MeToo and BLM her language is problematic. Do you have any advice on how to navigate these troubled waters? *Nyrenisgod*
Flannery O’Connor’s stuff was realism. In my teens I fell in love with her writing. I know she wasn’t racist, and I can’t speak for her but I think she used that language because it was the vernacular at the time. There’s a lot of literature that could run into that issue. It’s similar with blues music. One of my friends introduced me to an artist who’d sing stuff like “My nipples are as big as my thumb”. Really out there even by today’s standards, but I’m very uncomfortable with the idea of changing history. An interviewer once asked how I could be a country artist and a blues artist. I quoted Hank Williams – “Country music is the white man’s blues” – but it was changed to “the white person’s blues” cos they thought it was sexist or something. I was literally quoting something Hank Williams had said, so I was livid.

How has your daily life changed since having a stroke [in 2020]? *GodSaveTheCitizen*
I’ve done a lot of rehab and technically I’m still in recovery. The brain and body have a remarkable capacity to heal themselves, but I still shuffle when I walk. I haven’t been able to play guitar, which is the big thing. My husband [Tom Overby] keeps telling me I need to play through the pain. The actual playing is good exercise. I’m still doing shows with my band, just differently, and I can sing fine. Some people tell me I’m singing better than before I had the stroke.
As told to Dave Simpson
Lucinda Williams’ new album, Stories From a Rock N Roll Heart, is released 30 June on Highway 20 Records/Thirty Tigers.

Send us your questions for next week’s interviewee
theguardian.com/culture

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A scene in War Pony

‘Can I sit with you?’

How did Riley Keough and collaborator Gina Gammell end up directing a film set on a Native American reservation? They tell **Cath Clarke**

In 2015, Riley Keough was in a motel in South Dakota waiting to shoot a scene in Andrea Arnold’s American Honey. As the hours dragged, she got chatting to a couple of extras, Bill Reddy and Franklin Sioux Bob, two Native American men who’d grown up on the nearby Pine Ridge Reservation. “It was one of those situations where we started talking, and we just didn’t stop,” Keough says. “Then lunchtime came, and I found myself going, ‘Can I sit with you?’”

Keough and the two men swapped numbers and, after shooting wrapped, she flew from Los Angeles to the reservation for a holiday – joined by her friend and producing partner Gina Gammell. For a couple of weeks, they drove around, having fun, messing about making music videos for Sioux Bob, a musician.

That spur-of-the-moment holiday was the first of many visits, and the beginning of a creative partnership. Seven years later, it has led to a film, War Pony, directed by Keough and Gammell, working from a script by Reddy and Sioux Bob (with Gammell), writing about growing up on the reservation.

War Pony is the story of two young Oglala Lakota men on “the rez” whose lives cross paths at the end of the movie. Bill (Jojo Bapteise Whiting) is a charismatic 23-year-old who is equal parts swagger, hustle and sweetness.

Then there’s Matho, an impulsive 12-year-old, whose problems begin when he steals crystal meth from his drug dealer dad. Amazingly, both actors are first-timers, cast from the reservation. War Pony won the Caméra d’Or award for best debut feature at the Cannes film festival last year.

Today, Keough and Gammell are in Vancouver where they are working on another film. The pair met in their early 20s in LA, introduced by mutual friends. Within two weeks, Keough had more or less moved into her apartment, Gammell tells me: “I’d say that Riley was more homeless than she appeared when I first met her.”

> “I had amazing opportunities! I walked into agencies, met with agents”
> Keough on being a Presley

She is joking when she says “homeless”. Keough is Elvis’s granddaughter and the daughter of Lisa Marie Presley. So how did she end up with no place to live?

“My family were living in England at the time, she says. “So, whenever I was in LA I would just stay wherever I was welcome. That was Gina’s for a while.” As an interviewee she is friendly, but defensive, even a bit prickly; she has the wariness of someone who has grown up in the spotlight.

Keough has wanted to write and direct for as long as she can remember. But, until recently, she has been acting, landing her breakthrough film role in Max Max: Fury Road – and appearing in American Honey, and the TV shows The Girlfriend Experience and Daisy Jones & the Six. As a young actor, she is the first to admit that her privilege opened doors: “Amazing opportunities! I walked into agencies, met with agents.” But it left her racked with doubt: “I felt that I wouldn’t be taken seriously.”

Before the interview, I receive strict instructions from Keough’s publicist to avoid personal questions. In 2020, her brother Benjamin killed himself. Her mother died this January. A few days before we speak, the tabloids gleefully whoop up rumours of a legal wrangle between Keough and her grandmother Priscilla Presley over Lisa Marie’s estate.

About the film, I’m curious how Keough and Gammell approached directing an Indigenous story. One of the film’s producers, the Native American film-maker Willi White, has spoken of his previous negative experiences of film-makers from outside the community swooping in and extracting stories from the reservation. He believed these films directly increased prejudice against the community locally and reinforced harmful stereotypes.

By contrast, War Pony is a collaborative effort. It’s written by Reddy and Sioux Bob (with Gammell). All the Native American parts in the film – most of the cast – are played by Indigenous actors. But did Keough and Gammell have anxieties as white film-makers?

Not initially, says Keough, when they were just messing around, without a script or financiers. At the financing stage, the harmful stereotypes White warned against became evident. Potential backers felt the script wasn’t bleak enough. “That really disturbed me,” says Keough. To the film-makers’ annoyance, more than once it was suggested that they insert a white character and white perspective into the film. “By the time it came to making the movie,” says Gammell, “we were aggressively aware that we were two white film-makers making this movie. But we felt that if the other alternative was the film wasn’t going to get made …”

Keough and Gammell are at pains to share credit with Reddy and Sioux Bob. In all the publicity material, the writers’ names appear before the directors. “We were very much vessels for Bill and Franklin,” says Gammell. “The collaboration remained intact the whole way through shooting.”

Keough agrees: “What we wanted to achieve was to help facilitate showing Pine Ridge the way they see it, Billy and Frank; really take any of our thoughts or opinion out.”

“It’s a fact that we are non-Indigenous people making a very Indigenous film,” says Gammell. “And I think it became the mission of the film to find a way to consciously and carefully collaborate. That collaboration is the thing we’re proudest of.”

War Pony is released in the UK on 9 June.



Left, Keough at Cannes in 2022, and right, on set with Ladainian Crazy Thunder and Gammell

PHOTOGRAPHS: GETTY; BEAST PRODUCTIONS


In his Man Utd heyday

'I can do everything but be humble'

He's been a virtuoso footballer, a celebrated actor – and now Eric Cantona is a chanteur with serious chops. The Frenchman talks about politics, performance and Pep Guardiola with **Simon Hattenstone**

Take Nick Cave, add a splash of Leonard Cohen, sprinkle with Serge Gainsbourg and you might have something approximating Eric Cantona's first single. Yes, you read that right: The Friends We Lost is seriously good. The footballer turned actor turned chanteur whisper-croons his way through a gorgeous meditation on life with a handful of gnomic Cantona-isms thrown in for good measure ("Like a red snake in the water / In mind a winning number / Listen to the silence over the fear / The deep ocean that we can't hear"). The single is just the start. Next up is a tour, a live album and a studio album.

Cantona tells me that, from childhood, he always hoped to play his own music on stage, but he didn't think he had it in him. He hadn't written any music, nor did he think he could sing. But in lockdown he decided to teach himself the guitar to help him write songs for live performances. The albums are by the by – gigging is the main attraction. "I did it just to go on stage, because I love the connection with an audience – football, theatre, music."

Perhaps the biggest surprise is that it has taken Cantona 57 years to record his first single. He was, of course, the ultimate rock'n'roll footballer. Nobody had such style on the pitch, whether playing with his collar raised like a preening peacock, puffing his chest out to celebrate another wonder goal, or jumping into the crowd to kung-fu kick an abusive spectator. The assault earned him an eight-month ban and a two-week prison sentence, reduced to community service on appeal. Cantona walked away from football at 30, bored and disillusioned after winning five league titles in his six years in England (the first with Leeds, the rest with Manchester United).

Appropriately enough, Cantona, performer *sans pareil*, became an actor in the late 90s. Now, with more than 30 movies under his belt (perhaps most famously Ken Loach's Looking for Eric), he is embarking on a new venture.

We meet in London at the European headquarters of Universal, the record company releasing his music. Cantona is a tall, imposing figure. With a mottled beard, caterpillar eyebrows and spectacles, he could pass for a don – university or mafia. We have met previously, in 2009, when he was promoting Looking for Eric. Despite his well-earned bad-boy reputation, what struck me then was his warmth and a surprising shyness.

Fourteen years on, he has lost none of that warmth. The first thing he does is reminisce about Loach and the time we met. You sense he would be happy to talk

With Steve Evets in Ken Loach's Looking for Eric


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about the great British film-maker all day long.

Cantona was born in Marseille to a Spanish mother (a dressmaker) and a French father (a psychiatric nurse and artist). His father introduced him to Italian opera and he grew up listening to Puccini and Verdi. By his teens, his taste had evolved: "I listened to a lot of Sex Pistols, the Clash, AC/DC and Led Zeppelin." At 17, now a professional playing for Auxerre, his life was transformed - by discovering Jim Morrison and the Doors. "It was a shock for me. The lyrics, the energy, the live performances."

I ask him if he knows the answer to my one obscure Jim Morrison titbit. Who was the last person to see Morrison alive? "Agnès Varda," he says, instantly citing the French film-maker. Cantona knows a lot about a lot. When I was talking to him about Loach all those years ago, he could reel off the plots to his most obscure films.

Cantona is not finished listing his music heroes: "Nick Cave, Leonard Cohen and Daniel Johnston." I tell him I can hear the influences of Cave and Cohen in his music. He looks chuffed. How would he describe his singing style? "I hate it when people try to be like somebody. We all have our own personalities. I tried to find my voice. So I never took lessons. And I found it. I feel completely in connection with my voice."

I hear four songs, two in English, two in French. Cantona's voice is rich, seductive, very French. I assume Cantona wrote the lyrics and a professional musician wrote the music, but Cantona says he is responsible for all of it. "Nobody interferes with my work. People help me a lot, and I listen to them, but I decide everything. They are my songs and I *love* them."

Is The Friends We Lost about loss through fallouts or death? "Death," he says. "And it's about the time we waste. Like with family. I always have the feeling that I could have spent more time with them." Cantona, who lives in Lisbon with his family, mentions a Portuguese word - *saudade*. "It's just a feeling. It's when you remember something, for instance your grandmother, and you have this great feeling of seeing her in your *souvenir*, and you realise you will not see her any more because she is dead. I love this word. It's more than regret. It's this little moment."

The song I'll Make My Own Heaven contains the lyrics: "I've been heroic, I've been criminal / I've been angelic, I've been infernal / You hate me, you love me." It's not autobiographical, by any chance, is it? "Completely." He laughs. The song rocks with defiance. "Instead of regrets, it's: I've done some good things and I've done some bad things. I'm the only one who can judge, because what you see as bad maybe I don't see as bad." Cantona doesn't do regrets, with the exception of the kung-fu kick. In 2021, he stated: "I would have loved to have kicked him even harder."

After the successful appeal against his prison sentence in 1995, he said: "When the seagulls follow the trawler, it's because they think sardines will be thrown into the sea." Many people thought he had lost the plot, but his words made sense. He was the trawler, the press were the seagulls and the sardines were the morsels for which they scavenged. Some of your lyrics, I say, are as Cantona-esque as the sardine speech. "Everything is Cantona-esque,'" he replies, with a smile. "Even the music."

He has also shot the video for the single. "I did the lyrics, I wrote the music, I wrote the video and directed the video. I can do everything but be humble." He bursts out laughing. "It's all about derision. *Derision*?" He questions his use of the word. Laughing at yourself? "Yeah - or life. It's just a big circus."

Cantona has never lacked confidence, so it's interesting that he doubted whether he could write music. Well, he says, self-belief and doubt are not mutually exclusive. "The only thing I'm sure about are my doubts," he says. "Doubt gives you the ability to try things."

Mortality is a spur, he says. "If we were eternal, I wouldn't do so many things. Now, I'm 57; I don't want to spend time with people I don't like." He pauses. "Actually, I never did it. I don't want to waste time."

It's 26 years since he retired from football. I ask him if he sees anybody in today's game with a similar character to his own. He cites Pep Guardiola, the Manchester City manager. "He's an artist, a creator. Everything he does, nobody has done it before." And players? He shakes his head. "What I love in football today is only the work of Guardiola."

When I ask about the prospective sale of Manchester United, he quietly tells me he won't be going there. "Don't speak about that," he says. No? "No. I prefer to speak to you about the positive things in football."

Cantona has rarely shied away from controversy or difficult subjects. In 2010, he called for a social revolution against banks, encouraging people to withdraw their money in protest at the global financial crisis. In 2012, he announced he was collecting the 500 signatures from elected officials necessary to stand for president, only to reveal the next day that it was a stunt to highlight the French housing crisis. In 2015, he condemned western governments for their failure to support refugees fleeing wars started or inflamed by the west.

Would he ever go into politics? No, he says. He would rather say his piece through his art. "I do care about the world, and I used to talk about it, but it destroyed my health, because I feel it too strongly."

Is he surprised by how things have turned out for him post-football? "Yes. I think about my life - the life of a lucky man who has had the opportunity to express himself in different ways. It was in sport; now, it's in any kind of art. If I don't have the opportunity to express myself, I prefer to die."

Now, he can't wait to express himself on the road with his music. So much is unpredictable, so much can go wrong, he says, and that is when it becomes closest to the magic of sport. "On stage, it's the same as in life. You have a moment and it's how you answer it, how you react. It's great to have this kind of imperfection."

It's time for Cantona to have his photo taken. Last question, the publicist says. I ask Cantona what he would ask himself. He thinks about it. "Myself? Last question? I would ask: how many facets do you have? Because in my life I have done a lot of things." And your answer would be? "I will answer that I have as many facets as the photo of my psychiatrist has pixels." And with that, he grins, giggles and leaves.

The Friends We Lost is out today.



"I care about the world, but it destroyed my health, because I feel it too strongly



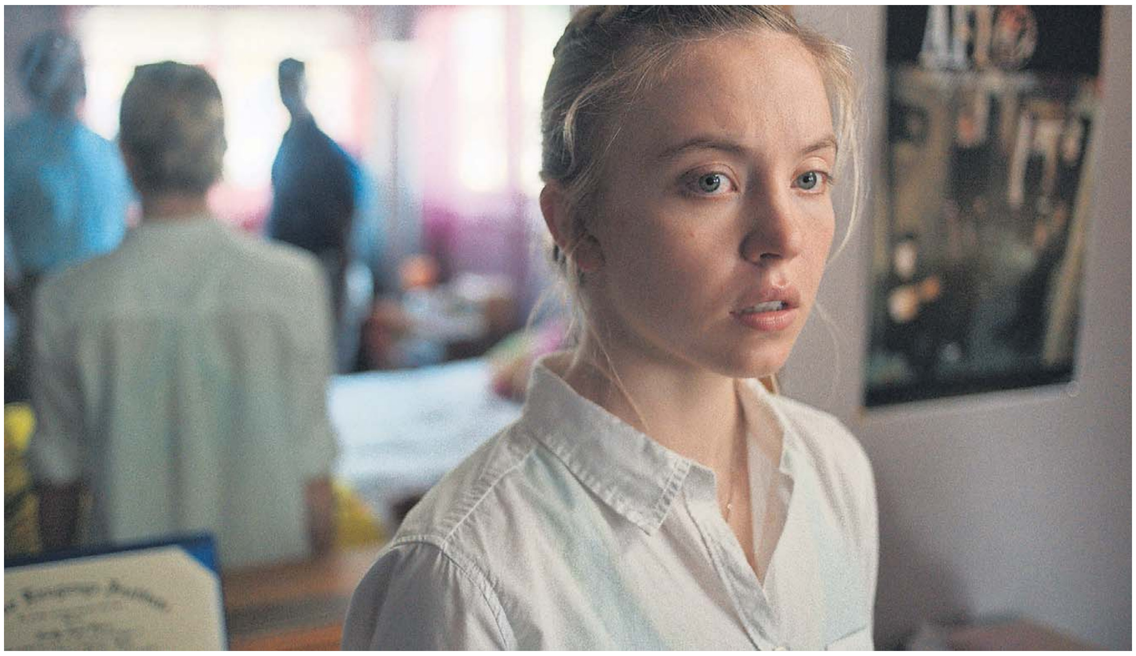
The infamous kung-fu kick

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★★★★★

Dir *Tina Satter*

Starring *Sydney Sweeney, Josh Hamilton, Marchánt Davis*

83 mins **Cert** *12*

With its elegant simplicity, formal daring and superbly subtle and controlled performances, Tina Satter's movie is an eerily gripping true-life drama about people who look like hyperreal ghosts from the past, inspired by the case of Reality Winner, a 26-year-old US intelligence officer arrested for leaking a government document concerning apparent Russian interference in the 2016 presidential election.

The transcript of an audio recording of the FBI officers' arrest and questioning of Winner later became public; Satter has used it, to the letter, as the basis of a movie (adapted from her original stage play Is This a Room). It shows us Winner, superbly played by Sydney Sweeney, as she is confronted outside her house by two federal agents, Garrick (Josh Hamilton) and Taylor (Marchánt Davis). With a weirdly matey pass-agg insistence, they repeatedly invite her to submit to their questioning on a "voluntary" basis without reading Winner her rights or mentioning anything about her needing a lawyer. This portrayal of their needling, overbearing ersatz friendliness is similar to the Monica Lewinsky interrogation scenes in the true-crime TV drama Impeachment: American Crime Story, starring Beanie Feldstein.

But it's also different to any other conventionally fictionalised and scripted drama. Reality's cool, unemphasised and unsignposted dialogue goes completely against what we expect from a movie's usual direction and editing.

This is what the raw and untreated dialogue we speak sounds like when it's all laid out. Winner voices concerns about her pets that might otherwise be a cue for gentle comedy. Not here – it just stands. And when Winner reveals an extensive collection of firearms, a normal drama might feel the need to explain a liberal whistleblower-hero having such pro-gun enthusiasm. Again: not here.

Sweeney's performance has a superb micro-calibration as she plays it calm and noncommittal. Is Winner a very cool customer, or in deep shock? This, the film says, is what it really feels like to face the law in a case like this: a calm, professional, technocratic but relentless display of overwhelming power. But it also asks us: is this, in fact, reality? Or is it not rather another form of fictional imposture? Is the room-temperature style of verbatim cinema an artefact that might not fully acknowledge the growing terror? Either way, it is a brilliant piece of work.

Amanda

★★★★☆

Dir *Carolina Cavalli*

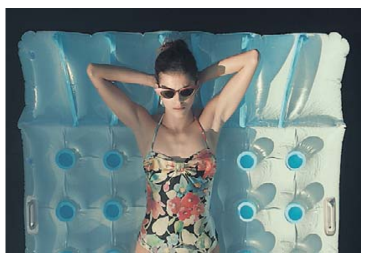
Starring *Benedetta Porcaroli, Monica Nappo, Galatéa Belluggi*

107 mins **Cert** *15*

Carolina Cavalli makes her feature debut with an absurdist existential comedy about an entitled twentysomething, Amanda (Benedetta Porcaroli, below), having a quarter-life crisis in her stately family home in Italy. She has no boyfriend, job or friends; when her mother (Monica Nappo) reminds her she was once friends with a local girl called Rebecca (Galatéa Belluggi), she fanatically sets out to re-befriend her – or create the illusion of past friendship. Rebecca turns out to be agoraphobic, but this only spurs Amanda on.

The film, like its heroine, is on its own spectrum of emotional bewilderment, full of looming closeups and wayward, asymmetric compositions, reminiscent of Lanthimos, Kaurismäki or Sorrentino, who is credited. It riffs on details that are part of a comically first-world-problem universe: Amanda wants enough supermarket loyalty points for an electric fan she can sell online. She even temps at an electrical goods store, instantly behaving with insouciant high-handedness towards her baffled boss.

Amanda, whose dramatic existence lies in her snappy dialogue with other alienated characters, reads like an imagined ball of gen Z anxiety with the anomie of 90s gen X-er. The film sustains its own confident language of style and surface, and these are cleverly created and maintained.



Spider-Man: Across the Spider-Verse

★★★☆☆

Dirs *Joaquim Dos Santos, Kemp Powers, Justin K Thompson*

Starring *Hailee Steinfeld (voice), Brian Tyree Henry (voice)*

140 mins **Cert** *PG*

Back in 2018, writers Phil Lord and Rodney Rothman gave us an utterly unexpected new web-spin on the infinite self-replication of Marvel Comics IP and its most reliable hero, Spider-Man. Instead of another MCU live action iteration, directed and produced in that hard, depthless CGI light, Spider-Man: Into the Spider-Verse was a brilliantly inventive animated fantasia about the Spidey mythology. The Spider-Verse was a cosmos inhabited by parallel Spider-folk, and everyone wondered how this kaleidoscopic new take could be applied elsewhere: James Bond: Into the James-Bond-Verse, or Bilbo Baggins: Into the Bilbo-Baggins-Verse.

Now we have a sequel, Across the Spider-Verse – did Apple deny them a certain Beatles track? – and a threequel, Beyond the Spider-Verse, coming. The second instalment features Spideys galore, and the result is frantic, eyeball-frazzling and, I must say, exhausting. It needs Ritalin, but boasts full-tilt energy, a blizzard of narrative data and twists it would be unsporting to reveal.

Miles Morales (voiced by



Shameik Moore) is a Spider-Man whose parents are exasperated by his unreliability; Gwen Stacy (Hailee Steinfeld) is a super arachnid in her own universe and, like Miles, has a parent in law enforcement (her dad, although it isn't clear why her gender-flipped status doesn't entitle her to a cop mom). There's a Spider-Man India (Karan Soni) and adult Peter Parker (Jake Johnson).

These movies hyperamplify the teen metaphor of identity in Stan Lee's great creation. Viewers have identified with Spider-Man since 1962, and can now choose how they do so. It's dynamic and intriguing, though the detail and the emotion can get lost in the splurge.

Games



Street Fighter 6

PlayStation 4/5, Xbox Series S/X, PC

★★★★★

Street Fighter 6 feels robust from the word go: bursting with things to do, assured in its gameplay and wrapped in a stylish, colourful swagger it can absolutely back up.

There are versus and arcade modes, a training room and some respectably detailed tutorials. A new addition is World Tour, which plays out more like an open-world game similar to Sega's Yakuza series – explore, level up your stats, choose stylish (or stupid) clothes and learn fighting styles.

But the meat and potatoes of fighting games is in one-on-one competition, and here, too, beginners are welcome. Simplified "modern" controls let newer players and veterans execute special moves faster and more consistently.

Whatever control scheme you're using, the classic rock-paper-scissors rhythm of carefully considered combat is utterly mesmerising. There's a varied cast of characters: standbys like Ryu, Chun-Li and Guile mix with newcomers such as Gladiator Marisa and my favourite, ballet-slash-judo-practitioner Manon.

This is a rare game where losing is still fun; it all feeds the drive to improve, find your warrior's path and rack up some sweet wins.

It takes a lot to reinvent a 30-plus-year-old franchise while honouring tradition, but Capcom has succeeded. Hopefully upcoming monetisation schemes are reasonable (details hadn't been fully announced at the time of writing) and online play remains smooth, because the king of fighting games, Street Fighter II Turbo, is on notice: here comes a new challenger.

Patrick Lum



Alexis Petridis's album of the week

Foo Fighters But Here We Are



A raw, unapologetic act of mourning

Rock

Label Roswell/RCA

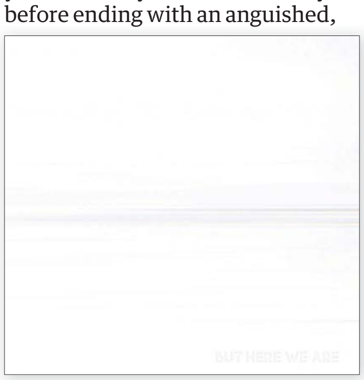
★★★★☆

In 1995, Foo Fighters released their eponymous debut album, recorded by Dave Grohl, who played every instrument on it, after Kurt Cobain's suicide. Contemporary press was revealing: the album wasn't greeted with the warmth one might have expected. Critics seemed suspicious, picking over its lyrics for references to his former band and its late frontman, despite Grohl's repeated insistence that almost all the songs predated Cobain's death and that whatever grieving he had to do was done in private.

How times change. Twenty-eight years later, Foo Fighters are enshrined as a dependable rock institution. Dave Grohl's charm means his name seldom appears in print unaccompanied by the phrase Nicest Guy In Rock. And the death in 2022 of Foo Fighters drummer Taylor Hawkins was marked with very public grieving: tribute concerts in LA and London, their bills featuring everyone from Rush to Liam Gallagher to Miley Cyrus, their conclusion emotionally charged performances by Foo Fighters themselves, Grohl fighting back tears as he sang.

Meanwhile, on Foo Fighters' first album since Hawkins' death - with Grohl filling in on drums - Joshua Freese has been announced as Hawkins' live replacement. But Here We Are makes no bones about being a musical act of mourning, opening with Grohl reeling from hearing of his best friend's passing - "It came in a flash / It came out of nowhere / It happened so fast" - and ending with him singing: "Rest - you will be safe now." Every song in between is about death, alternately poleaxed by grief, temporarily overwhelmed by memories or resolving to carry on: Nothing at All sounds like Grohl's roaring justification for Foo Fighters' continuing existence.

The cover features a dedication to both Hawkins and Grohl's late mother, Virginia, whose deaths the lyrics occasionally conflate: "Everything we love must grow old," sings Grohl on Beyond Me, before the thought of his bandmate brings him up short, and he adds, "or so I'm told". The Teacher, meanwhile, is a lengthy, episodic song named after his mum's profession, which fixates on the way a parent's passing can make you consider your own mortality before ending with an anguished,



repeated yell of "goodbye" and headphone-scourging noise.

If the lyrics are largely turned inward, the music hardly ever follows suit. Rest has a lullaby-like quality, but for the most part, the album sticks to Foo Fighters' wall-of-guitars blueprint, as pretty much every album has done, albeit with some minor tweaks: a distinctly gothy-sounding echo threads through the opening of Hearing Voices, while the hazy melody of Show Me How could pass for My Bloody Valentine. There are moments that sound not broken but triumphant and weirdly euphoric, at odds with the words, as when Rescued gallops to its conclusion or Beyond Me surges into swaying anthem territory.

That it works rather than feeling odd or jarring may be down to the fact that But Here We Are does what Foo Fighters do noticeably better than immediate predecessors, which were marked by a sense of obligation. This time, the tunes are more polished, the dynamic shifts punchier: it's as if the desire to make an album that stands as a worthy memorial has given them a fresh sense of purpose.

In the charged Under You or The Glass, which sets the bereaved's howl of unfairness - "I had a person I love / And just like that I was left to live without him" - to an almost implausible preponderance of hooks, they may even have songs that join I'll Stick Around and Best of You in the pantheon of greatest hits. It's crowd-pleasing stuff, but that somehow feels a more fitting memorial than a challenging dark night of the soul would. After all, bounding out from behind his kit to sing the Faces' Stay With Me or Queen's Somebody to Love, Taylor Hawkins was something of a crowd-pleaser himself.

More reviews at theguardian.com/music

Contemporary album of the month

Artist Wild Up

Album Julius Eastman Vol 3

Label New Amsterdam Records

★★★★☆



Black, gay, impish and provocative, Julius Eastman (1940-1990) seems to speak with urgency to 21st-century audiences such as the sonically omnivorous LA collective Wild Up.

The 20-minute title track, If You're So Smart, Why Aren't You Rich?, written in 1977, is a series of rising and falling chromatic scales that are slowly mutilated, complete with fiddly orchestrations, background countermelodies, vocal harmonies and instrumental freakouts. The 12-minute The Moon's Silent Modulation, from 1970, is an episodic piece of serialism, featuring forays into discordant operatic harmonies, swing-style walking bass, rumbling cellos and pianos that appear to be a fraction of a tone apart.

Best of all is a thrilling version of his 1979 work Evil Nigger. It's minimalist, but this is a wild, sensual, high-intensity, maximalist minimalism as unsettling as its title. It starts with jabbering, rumbling pianos, then piles on strings that are initially lush and romantic but end up neurotic and terrifying. It's demotic, demonic and blissfully delirious stuff. **John Lewis**

Rap

Artist McKinley Dixon

Album Beloved! Paradise! Jazz!?

Label City Slang

★★★★☆



The Richmond, Virginia rapper broke out in 2021 with For My Mama and Anyone Who Look Like Her, a lush collection of expansive jazz-rap that makes great use of his elastic flow.

Dixon's fourth album is more literary and exploratory still, full of imagistic riches and linguistic curiosity, uttered in his warm, often reedy, voice. He is also clearly working to squish For My Mama into more traditional structures. It yields several fleet, invigorating pop songs: Tyler Forever, a booming trap song that hymns a late friend, repeats "Tyler forever", before interjecting: "Nah, this chorus ain't clever" - the point, he raps, is that it makes people remember. Dixon clearly loves florid language, but his genius lies in knowing when less is more. **Shaad D'Souza**

Classical

Artist Mary Bellamy

Album Behind the Transparent Surface

Label Huddersfield Contemporary Records

★★★★☆



Arcane instruments feature prominently in Mary Bellamy's music, and none are stranger than those in the piece that gives the title to this collection. In it, Bellamy uses four instruments invented by Harry Partch to commute between frantic activity and "transparent" stasis; orthodox tuning and Partch's microtones.

A new design of bass oboe called the lupophon features in Unfurling, and while the three other works are scored for more conventional forces, Bellamy creates strikingly original textures. In Rift, a mysterious muted harp and furious double bass glissandi conjure crumbling instability, while in the solo pieces - the bass flute Semblance and the percussion of Dual Impulse - there's the same aural imagination and intent to extract maximum intensity from the sounds. **Andrew Clements**



Oliver Savell as Alan Carr and Shaun Dooley as his father, Graham

Review Changing Ends, ITVX

Alan Carr's childhood makes for a relentlessly funny comedy

★★★★☆



Rebecca Nicholson

It would take a hard heart not to fall for Changing Ends. Open, welcoming and beaming with easy charm, it defies you not to enjoy it. Written by Alan Carr and Two Doors Down's Simon Carlyle, it tells the story of Carr's early life in Northampton, joining him on the precipice of "big school" in 1986. Carr is not your everyday 11-year-old. With his penchant for scarves, earmuffs and Murder, She Wrote, it is no great surprise to anyone that he ends up as a confidant of the dinner ladies, and not the football lads. Still, it isn't easy being different in the east Midlands in the 80s and young Alan has issues to deal with on all sides.

Carr himself appears as a sort of ghost of Christmas Yet-to-Come, albeit a more cheerful one, dropping into scenes to narrate for a while, or crack jokes about the star he will become. But the show belongs to Oliver Savell, who is remarkable as the young Alan. Sometimes, on screen, you can tell when a child actor is just doing their best, but Savell is fantastic and manages to embody the real Carr without it seeming like an impersonation. He is camp, he is cheeky and he deserves all the acclaim that will inevitably come.

From family to friends, from school to home, young Alan has a lot to contend with. He has "the voice of an elderly grandmother", his teeth and glasses provide the regular punchlines you might expect, and even as a child, his busybody neighbour Ange suggests he might be, so to speak, "half rice, half chips". His mother, Christine (Nancy Sullivan), supports him all the way, but he has a more complicated relationship with his father, Graham (Shaun Dooley), a gruff man's man who manages Northampton Town football club – languishing at the bottom of the fourth division.

The first episode sets up Alan as the perpetual outsider. Graham is embarrassed by his un-sporty son – "Everything this family has is down to sport," he says, though it looks as if the family line might stop with his eldest – and Ange won't let her son Charlie play with Alan any more. Less self-possessed children may have crumbled when faced with such disapproval, but what makes this series so lovely is that Alan is absolutely certain of who he is, and he refuses to be "normal" for anyone, whatever that means. He gives it a good go with football, not to please his dad, but to win back the friendship of Charlie. As an overdramatic and not entirely graceful boy, it doesn't quite go to plan.

Football's loss is a comedy audience's gain, however, and this show is relentlessly funny. In a clever twist, Alan is also embarrassed by Graham, particularly when he starts big school and he desperately attempts to cover up the fact that his dad is the Cobblers' much-maligned manager. Both of them, it seems, are used to getting grief, but oddly enough, Alan seems much more capable of carrying it than his father. "To think my dad got his knickers in a twist because I liked country dancing," he says, as the footballers of Northampton Town share cigarettes in the communal bath.

Still, whenever you think the drama might start to dip into schmaltz, it swerves it, preferring a light, self-deprecating touch. Its recreation of the mid-80s is so faithfully unglamorous that you can practically smell the Old Spice and the pies radiating off the screen, and it hits that sweet spot of nostalgia that is unsparing while allowing itself to be just a little bit fond of those days, too. Episode two deals with the trauma of enforced showers after PE, the horrors of PE and post-divorce PE teachers, while episode three sees Alan finding his true calling through drama lessons, with a fantastically over-the-top teacher who sees him for who he really is. "Alan, you're a one-off," she tells him. "That's why they don't like you."

Crucially, young Alan doesn't much care about being liked. He loves Prince, shell suits and Angela Lansbury and seems unbothered by whether he is "bloody embarrassing" or not. The Carr family's rivalry with their uptight neighbours is great and that aspect has the feel of a classic British sitcom to it. Changing Ends emerges as a sillier, warmer cross between Ladhood, Liam Williams' own fourth-wall-breaking comedy about his youth, and Keeping Up Appearances. That might sound about as appealing as a Frazzle dipped in Tizer, but when he raids the bag of clothes that Ange has donated to charity, young Alan makes it clear that sometimes, clashing patterns just work.

What's On

Scan the QR code below to sign up for the What's On newsletter, our free TV email with the best reviews, news and exclusive writing direct to your inbox every Monday

Black Ops
9.30pm, BBC One



In the penultimate episode of the comedy thriller, undercover wannabe cops Dom (Gbemisola Ikumelo) and Kay (Hammed Animashaun, *above*) wonder if a residential home is a front for the Brightmarsh gang. There's only one way to find out: a spot of terrible volunteering. Meanwhile, Tevin (Akemnji Ndifornyen) is growing even more suspicious of the pair after seeing them leave the local police station. Watch out for Zoë Wanamaker, who makes a guest appearance.
Hollie Richardson

Gardeners' World
8pm, BBC Two
Cabbages, roses, rare trees and tulips are celebrated in this week's episode. Monty Don also gives tips on colourful trailing plant schemes and Carol Klein visits a nursery that is growing thousands of plants for the RHS Hampton Court Palace garden festival, held in the first week of July. **HR**

Poker Face
9pm, Sky Max
Following an epic opening episode, the gravel-voiced Charlie Cale (Natasha Lyonne) is on the run and – using her peculiar gift of being able to sniff out any lie told – reluctantly solving murders along the way. In this week's double bill, picking up work as a barbecuer then as a band's roadie leads her into more trouble. **HR**

The Chris & Rosie Ramsey Show
10.40pm, BBC One
This week's guests on the podcasters turned TV stars' chatshow are Fred Sirieix and his partner, "Fruitcake". It's not her real name, but the charming term that the First Dates host has given her to disguise her identity. We can only guess what might be top of her list when they enter the "beefs" section of the programme.
Alexi Duggins

Bel-Air
11.20pm, Sky Max
The second season of this strangely inert revamp of the classic 90s sitcom The Fresh Prince of Bel-Air continues. This week, Carlton is irritated when Will is nominated for a leadership award, while the latter struggles to find his feet in his new basketball team.
Phil Harrison

Bump
11.30pm, BBC One
Two strong episodes showcase this Australian dramedy's gift for low-key, gently yearning romantic drama. In short, Oly wishes she were still with her daughter's father, Santi, and deep down he feels the same. A Mother's Day episode, however, gives everyone a chance to take stock.
Jack Seale

BBC One

6.0 **Breakfast** (T) **9.15** Morning Live (T) **10.0** Rip Off Britain (T) **10.45** Fraud Squad (T) **11.15** Homes Under the Hammer (T) (R) **12.15** Bargain Hunt (T) **1.0** News (T) **1.30** Regional News and Weather (T) **1.45** Father Brown (T) (R) **2.30** Money for Nothing (T) **3.0** Escape to the Country (T) (R) **3.45** Garden Rescue (T) **4.30** Clean It, Fix It (T) **5.15** Pointless (T) **6.0** News (T) **6.30** Regional News and Weather (T) **7.0** The One Show (T) **7.30** Our Lives: My Husband the MMA Fighter (T)

8.0 **Question of Sport** (T) Paddy McGuinness hosts.
8.30 **Would I Lie to You?** (T) (R) With Chizzy Akudolu, Simon Gregson, Michelle Visage and Henning Wehn.
9.0 **Have I Got News for You** (T) Naga Munchetty hosts.
9.30 **Black Ops** (T) Dom and Kay set about investigating Riverford Residential Home.

10.0 **News** (T)
10.30 **Regional News** (T) Weather
10.40 **The Chris & Rosie Ramsey Show** (T) With Fred Sirieix.
11.30 **Bump** (T) Oly and Santi are faced with a reality they aren't prepared for.
12.0 **Bump** (T) **12.35** FILM Eastern Promises (David Cronenberg, 2007) (T) Thriller. **2.15** Weather (T) **2.20** News (T)

BBC Two

6.0 **Great Coastal Railway Journeys** (T) (R) **6.30** Garden Rescue (T) (R) **7.15** Clean It, Fix It (T) (R) **8.0** Sign Zone: Gardeners' World (T) (R) **9.0** Nicky Campbell (T) **11.0** News (T) **1.0** Impossible (T) (R) **1.45** Eggheads (T) (R) **2.15** Food Map of Britain (T) (R) **2.45** A Countryside Summer (T) (R) **3.15** What Britain Buys and Sells in a Day (T) (R) **4.15** Back in Time for the Corner Shop (T) (R) **5.15** Flog It! (T) (R) **6.0** Richard Osman's House of Games (T) (R) **6.30** Great Coastal Railway Journeys (T) **7.0** Today at the Test (T)

8.0 **Gardeners' World** (T) Monty Don creates colourful planting schemes with trailing plants.
9.0 **Hidden Treasures of the National Trust** (T) A look behind the scenes at three unique houses in the north-east of England that tell a story of wealth, industry and art in Northumberland.

10.0 **Mortimer & Whitehouse: Gone Fishing** (T) (R)
10.30 **Newsnight** (T) Weather
11.05 **MOTDx** (T) Football chat.
11.35 **Strike: Inside the Unions** (T)
12.35 **Sign Zone** Once Upon a Time in Northern Ireland (T) (R) **1.50** Forensics: The Real CSI (T) (R) **2.50** Matt Willis: Fighting Addiction (T) (R) **3.50** This Is BBC Two (T)

ITV1

6.0 **Good Morning Britain** (T) **9.0** Lorraine (T) **10.0** This Morning (T) **12.30** Loose Women (T) **1.0** News and Weather (T) **1.20** Local News and Weather (T) **1.30** Racing Live: The Oaks (T) **5.0** The Chase (T) (R) **6.0** Local News and Weather (T) **6.30** News and Weather (T) **7.0** Emmerdale (T) **7.30** Coronation Street (T)

8.0 **Britain's Got Talent** (T) Ant and Dec host the last of the semi-finals in the nationwide talent search.

10.0 **News** (T) Weather
10.35 **Local News** (T) Weather
10.45 **Our House** (T) (R) Fi has to come to terms with losing the house.
11.45 **Our House** (T) (R) Fi finally discovers the truth.
12.45 **Shop: Ideal World** **3.0** Million Pound Pawn (T) (R) **3.50** Unwind With ITV (T) **5.05** Caribbean Kitchen (T) (R)

Channel 4

6.05 **Countdown** (T) (R) **6.45** Cheers (T) (R) **7.35** The King of Queens (T) (R) **8.25** Frasier (T) (R) **9.55** Find It, Fix It, Flog It (T) (R) **10.55** Couples Come Dine With Me (T) (R) **11.55** News (T) **12.0** Steph's Packed Lunch (T) **2.10** Countdown (T) **3.0** A Place in the Sun (T) (R) **4.0** The Great House Giveaway (T) (R) **5.0** Sarah Beeny's New Country Lives (T) **6.0** The Simpsons (T) (R) **6.30** Hollyoaks (T) (R) **7.0** News (T)

8.0 **The Big Interiors Battle** (T) The semi-finalists tackle the challenge of the spare rooms in their flats with hopes of impressing judge Dara Huang and making it to the final two.
9.0 **Gogglebox** (T) The armchair critics share their opinions on what they have been watching during the week.

10.0 **The Lateish Show With Mo Gilligan** (T) Mo Farah guests.
11.05 **Sarah Millican: Chatterbox Live** (T) (R) Standup show.
12.10 FILM **Charlie's Angels** (2019) (T) Comedy. **2.05** Kitchen Nightmares USA (T) (R) **2.55** Come Dine With Me (T) (R) **5.0** Fill Your House for Free (T) (R) **5.15** The Yorkshire Dales and the Lakes (T) (R)

Channel 5

6.0 **Milkshake!** **9.15** Jeremy Vine (T) **11.15** Storm Huntley (T) **12.15** Alexis Conran (T) **1.40** News (T) **1.45** Home and Away (T) (R) **2.15** FILM Killer Family: A Nanny Nightmare (Joe Russo, 2020) (T) **4.0** Paul Martin's Antiques Showdown (T) **5.0** News (T) **6.0** Eggheads (T) (R) **7.0** The Cotswolds & Beyond With Pam Ayres (T) (R)

8.0 **Susan Calman's Grand Day Out** (T) The comedian explores the Isle of Man.
9.0 **World's Most Scenic Railway Journeys** (T) (R) A six-hour journey from York to Edinburgh onboard the steam locomotive Tornado, enjoying some of the best food and luxury service that trains can offer.

10.0 **Dick Emery: The Naughty Bits & More** (T) (R) Friends and colleagues of the comic actor share their stories.
12.0 **80s Greatest Songs: 1982** (T) (R) **1.20** Teleshopping (T) **3.20** The Yorkshire Vet (T) (R) **4.15** Great Artists (T) (R) **4.40** Wildlife SOS (T) (R) **5.05** House Doctor (T) (R) **5.35** Fireman Sam (T) (R)

BBC Four

7.0 **Top of the Pops** (T) (R) From 1994. Jarvis Cocker presents. **7.30** Top of the Pops (T) (R) From 1994, with Snap, China Black and Rozalla.

8.0 **Top of the Pops** (T) (R) From 1986, with Cashflow, Simply Red and Pet Shop Boys.
8.30 **Top of the Pops** (T) (R) From 1977, with Elkie Brooks, the Muppets and Twiggy.
9.0 **In Concert: Gordon Lightfoot** (T) (R) A concert by the singer-songwriter, accompanied by Red Shea and Richard Haynes.

10.05 **Sounds of the Sixties: The Folk Revival** (T) (R) With Pete Seeger, Tim Buckley, Joan Baez and Bob Dylan.
10.35 FILM **Once Were Brothers: Robbie Robertson and the Band** (Daniel Roher, 2019) (T)
12.10 **Folk America on Later … With Jools Holland** (R) **1.10** Top of the Pops (T) (R) **3.10** Sounds of the Sixties (T) (R)

Other channels

BBC Three
7.0pm Athletics: Diamond League Florence **9.0** Eddie Hall: The Beast v the Mountain **10.0** FILM Goodfellas (1990) **12.20** I Kissed a Boy **1.10** I Kissed a Boy **2.0** Unreal! With Olivia Neill **2.30** Sky High Club: Scotland and Beyond **3.0** Brickies **3.30** Brickies

Dave
6.0am Teleshopping **7.10** Yianni: Supercar Customiser **7.35** Yianni: Supercar Customiser **8.0** Special Ops: Crime Squad UK **9.0** Cop Car Workshop **10.0** Survivor Australia **11.30** Rick Stein's French Odyssey **12.0** The Force: Behind the Line **12.30** The Force: Behind the Line **1.0** Border Force: America's Gatekeepers **2.0** Top Gear **3.0** Top Gear **4.0** David Jason: Planes, Trains and Automobiles **5.0** Rick Stein's Secret France **6.0** Taskmaster **7.0** Richard Osman's House of Games **7.40** Richard Osman's House of Games **8.20** Mortimer & Whitehouse: Gone Fishing **9.0** Mortimer & Whitehouse: Gone Fishing **9.40** Meet the Richardsons at Christmas **10.20** Meet the Richardsons at Christmas **11.0** QI XL **12.0** Mock the Week **12.40** QI **1.20** Taskmaster **2.30** Richard Osman's House of Games **3.0** Whose Line Is It Anyway? USA **3.25** Whose Line Is It Anyway? USA **4.0** Teleshopping

E4
6.0am Hollyoaks **6.30** Hollyoaks **7.0** Ramsay's Kitchen Nightmares USA **8.0** Ramsay's Kitchen Nightmares USA **9.0** The Neighborhood **9.30** The Neighborhood **10.0** The Big Bang Theory **10.30** The Big Bang Theory **11.0** Modern Family **11.30** Modern Family **12.0** Brooklyn Nine-Nine **12.30** Brooklyn Nine-Nine **1.0** The Big Bang Theory **1.30** The Big Bang Theory **2.0** The Big Bang Theory **2.30** The Big Bang Theory **3.0** Modern Family **3.30** Modern Family **4.0** Young Sheldon **4.30** Young Sheldon **5.0** The Big Bang Theory **5.30** The Big Bang Theory **6.0** The Big Bang Theory **6.30** The Big Bang Theory **7.0** Hollyoaks **7.30** The Big Bang Theory **8.0** Below Deck Sailing Yacht **9.0** FILM Crocodile Dundee II (1988) **11.10** Impractical Jokers **11.40** Impractical Jokers **12.10** Naked Attraction **1.15** Naked Attraction **2.15** Gogglebox **3.10** Below Deck Sailing Yacht **4.0** Ramsay's Kitchen Nightmares USA **4.45** The Neighborhood **5.10** The Neighborhood

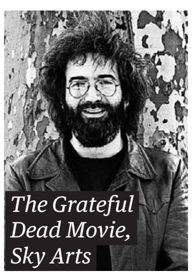
Film4
11.0am FILM Gunfight at the OK Corral (1957) **1.25** FILM The Tin Star (1957) **3.15** FILM Oliver! (1968) **6.10** FILM Transformers (2007) **9.0** FILM Ronin (1998) **11.25** FILM Snatch (2000) **1.30** FILM Blindspotting (2018)

ITV2
6.0am World's Funniest Videos **6.35** Totally Bonkers Guinness World Records **7.0** Dress to Impress **8.0** One Tree Hill **9.0** Dawson's Creek **10.0** Love Bites **11.0** Dress to Impress **12.0** Britain's Got Talent **2.0** Chuck **3.05** One Tree Hill **4.0** Dawson's Creek **5.0** Celebrity Dinner Date **6.0** Celebrity Catchphrase **7.0** Superstore **8.0** Bob's Burgers **8.30** Bob's Burgers **9.0** FILM Fast & Furious 8 (2017) **11.40** Family Guy **12.10** Family Guy **12.40** American Dad! **1.30** Superstore **.30** Totally Bonkers Guinness World Records **3.0** Teleshopping

Sky Max
6.0am Stop, Search, Seize **8.0** Supergirl **9.0** Quantum Leap **10.0** The Flash **11.0** NCIS: New Orleans **1.0** Hawaii Five-0 **2.0** MacGyver **3.0** Quantum Leap **4.0** Supergirl **5.0** The Flash **6.0** Stop, Search, Seize **8.0** A League of Their Own: European Road Trip **9.0** Poker Face **11.20** Bel-Air **12.20** Enter the Spider-Verse: A Spider-Man Special **12.50** Strike Back: Legacy **1.55** Road Wars **3.0** Hawaii Five-0 **4.0** MacGyver **5.0** Highway Patrol **5.30** Highway Patrol

Sky Arts
6.0am Beethoven: The Complete Symphonies **6.45** Verdi's Rigoletto: On the Lake **9.0** Tales of the Unexpected **10.0** Alfred Hitchcock Presents **10.30** Alfred Hitchcock Presents **11.0** Discovering: Barbara Stanwyck **12.0** National Treasures: The Art of Collecting **1.0** Tales of the Unexpected **1.30** Tales of the Unexpected **2.0** The Art of the Garden **3.0** The Directors **4.0** Discovering: Gregory Peck **5.0** Tales of the Unexpected **5.30** Tales of the Unexpected **6.0** Alfred Hitchcock Presents **6.30** Alfred Hitchcock Presents **7.0** Discovering: John Lennon **8.0** Guy Garvey: From the Vaults **9.0** Santana: Hymns for Peace - Live at Montreux 2004 **12.15** FILM The Grateful Dead Movie (1977) **2.45** Classic Albums **3.45** The Movies **4.45** Auction: George Michael Special **5.10** Video Killed the Radio Star **5.35** Video Killed the Radio Star

Sky Atlantic
6.0am Richard E Grant's Hotel Secrets **7.55** Big Love **10.05** True Blood **12.15** Game of Thrones **1.20** Ray Donovan **3.30** Big Love **4.35** Big Love **5.45** True Blood **7.55** Game of Thrones **9.0** Souls **10.0** White House Plumbers **11.05** Yellowjackets **1.15** Big Love **2.20** Game of Thrones **3.20** Richard E Grant's Hotel Secrets


The Grateful Dead Movie, Sky Arts

Radio

Radio 3
6.30am Breakfast **9.0** Essential Classics **12.0** Composer of the Week: Domenico Scarlatti (5/5) **1.0** Lunchtime Concert. The Amatis Trio perform pieces by Schubert and Suk at the Hay festival. (4/4) **2.0** Afternoon Concert. The Frankfurt Radio Symphony Orchestra play Strauss's Also sprach Zarathustra. Plus, the BBC Symphony Orchestra play Sibelius and madrigals by Gesualdo and his contemporaries. **4.30** The Listening Service (R) **5.0** In Tune **7.0** Classical Mixtape **7.30** In Concert. Daniele Rustioni conducts the Ulster Orchestra and violist Timothy Ridout in Berlioz's Harold in Italy, Elgar's In the South and Respighi's Pines of Rome. **10.0** The Verb **10.45** The Essay: Charles Aznavour in Five Songs. Nare Mkrtchyan on They Fell. (5/5) **11.0** Late Junction. Jennifer Lucy Allan shares music that caught her ear on a recent trip to Japan. **1.0** Composed With Devonté Hynes **2.0** Piano Flow With Gabriels **3.0** Through the Night

Radio 4
6.0am Today **9.0** Desert Island Discs (R) **9.45** (LW) Daily Service **9.45** (FM) Book of the Week: Pathogenesis - How Germs Made History (5/5) **10.0** Woman's Hour **10.45** (LW) TMS: England v Ireland - Day Two **11.0** (FM) Fit for Work. Attempts to stop the disabled "languishing" on benefits. (1/3) **11.30** (FM) Ed Reardon's Week (R) **12.0** (FM) News **12.01** (LW) Shipping Forecast **12.04** (LW) TMS **12.04** (FM) Archive on 4: Marvel v DC Comics (R) **1.0** (FM) The World at One **1.45** (FM) Oliver Burkeman's Inconvenient Truth (5/5) **2.0** (FM) The Archers (R) **2.15** (FM) The Attendant. Offbeat love story, by the Cullen Brothers. (1/5) (R) **2.45** (FM) Welcome to the Neighbourhood With Jayde Adams. Kiell Smith-Bynoe guests. (2/12) **3.0** (FM) Gardeners' Question Time **3.45** (FM) Short Works **4.0** (FM) Last Word **4.30** (FM) More Or Less (R) **5.0** (FM) PM **5.54** (LW) Shipping Forecast **5.57** (LW) TMS **5.57** (FM) Weather **6.0** (FM) News **6.30** (FM) The News Quiz (6/7) **7.0** The Archers **7.15** Screenshot (9/9) **8.0** Any Questions? Alex Forsyth presents political debate from the Corn Exchange in Wallingford, with Harry Cole, Dame Andrea Leadsom MP and Christina McAnea. **8.50** A Point of View **9.0** Pop Star Philosophy (R) **10.0** The World Tonight **10.45** Book at Bedtime (5/10) **11.0** Americast **11.30** The Spark. James Bridle argues that the climate crisis should prompt humility. (2/4) **12.0** News **12.30** Book of the Week (5/5) **12.48** Shipping Forecast **1.0** As World Service **5.20** Shipping Forecast **5.30** News **5.43** Prayer for the Day **5.45** Please Protect Abraham (R)

Radio 4 Extra
6.0am The Events at Black Tor (5/6) **6.30** A Charles Paris Mystery: A Reconstructed Corpse (4/4) **7.0** One Two Three Four: The Beatles in Time (5/5) **7.15** The Citadel (5/5) **7.30** Dr Phil's Bedside Manner (2/4) **8.0** Steptoe and Son (11/13) **8.30** Flying the Flag (7/8) **9.0** Act Your Age (3/6) **9.30** Bleak Expectations (5/6) **10.0** The Believers **11.0** The Events at Black Tor (5/6) **11.30** A Charles Paris Mystery (4/4) **12.0** One Two Three Four (5/5) **12.15** The Citadel (5/5) **12.30** Dr Phil's Bedside Manner (2/4) **1.0** Steptoe and Son (11/13) **1.30** Flying the Flag (7/8) **2.0** Act Your Age (3/6) **2.30** Bleak Expectations (5/6) **3.0** The Believers **4.0** The Events at Black Tor (5/6) **4.30** A Charles Paris Mystery (4/4) **5.0** One Two Three Four (5/5) **5.15** The Citadel (5/5) **5.30** Dr Phil's Bedside Manner (2/4) **6.0** Steptoe and Son (11/13) **6.30** Flying the Flag (7/8) **7.0** Act Your Age (3/6) **7.30** Bleak Expectations (5/6) **8.0** The Frost Tapes (8/8) **8.30** Frankly Speaking **9.0** The Curious Cases of Rutherford & Fry (5/12) **9.30** Across the Narrow Water (2/2) **10.0** Mark Steel's in Town (6/6) **10.30** DMs Are Open (3/7) **11.0** Tim Key's Late Night Poetry Programme (4/6) **11.15** Knocker (4/6) **11.30** Les Kelly's Britain (4/4) **12.0** Earworm **12.45** Someone Like You (5/5) **1.0** The Believers **2.0** The Events at Black Tor (5/6) **2.30** A Charles Paris Mystery (4/4) **3.0** One Two Three Four (5/5) **3.15** The Citadel (5/5) **3.30** Dr Phil's Bedside Manner (2/4) **4.0** Steptoe and Son (11/13) **4.30** Flying the Flag (7/8) **5.0** Act Your Age (3/6) **5.30** Bleak Expectations (5/6)

Yesterday's solutions

Sudoku no 6,082

7	2	9	6	1	5	4	8	3
4	1	8	9	2	3	5	6	7
3	5	6	8	7	4	2	9	1
1	8	3	4	9	6	7	5	2
6	7	5	3	8	2	9	1	4
2	9	4	1	5	7	6	3	8
8	4	1	7	6	9	3	2	5
5	6	7	2	3	8	1	4	9
9	3	2	5	4	1	8	7	6

Suguru

4	2	5	1	5	3
3	1	3	2	4	1
4	2	5	1	3	2
1	3	4	2	4	1
2	5	1	3	5	3
3	4	2	4	1	2

Wordsearch

R	E	T	T	O	T	H	T	W
I	R	E	V	A	W	A	E	I
S	F	L	I	M	S	Y	E	N
T	E	R	O	C	K	Y	T	R
U	S	A	H	A	N	R	E	E
M	O	I	H	E	I	D	R	L
B	O	S	E	C	D	A	L	B
L	L	R	K	O	N	S	O	M
E	A	E	D	I	Z	Z	Y	E
C	T	E	F	A	S	N	U	R
Y	U	N	E	V	E	N	C	T

Solution no 16,558

S	U	C	K		C	H	O	W	M	E	I	N
O		R		P		O		I		S		I
L	E	A	T	H	E	R		P	E	T	A	L
S		N		Y		S		E		O		E
T	E	E	N	S		E	R	R	I	N	G	
I				I		C				I		F
C	U	T	T	O	T	H	E	C	H	A	S	E
E		R				E		O				N
	T	A	U	R	U	S		G	U	L	A	G
Y		D		E		T		E		E		S
A	D	U	L	T		N	I	N	E	V	E	H
L		C		R		U		T		E		U
E	Y	E	T	O	O	T	H		D	E	L	I

Word wheel
CHIEFTAIN

Trivia corner

Which of the following stage productions won Matthew Warchus an Olivier award for best director?

a. Matilda
b. Groundhog Day
c. Hamlet
d. Art
Answer top right

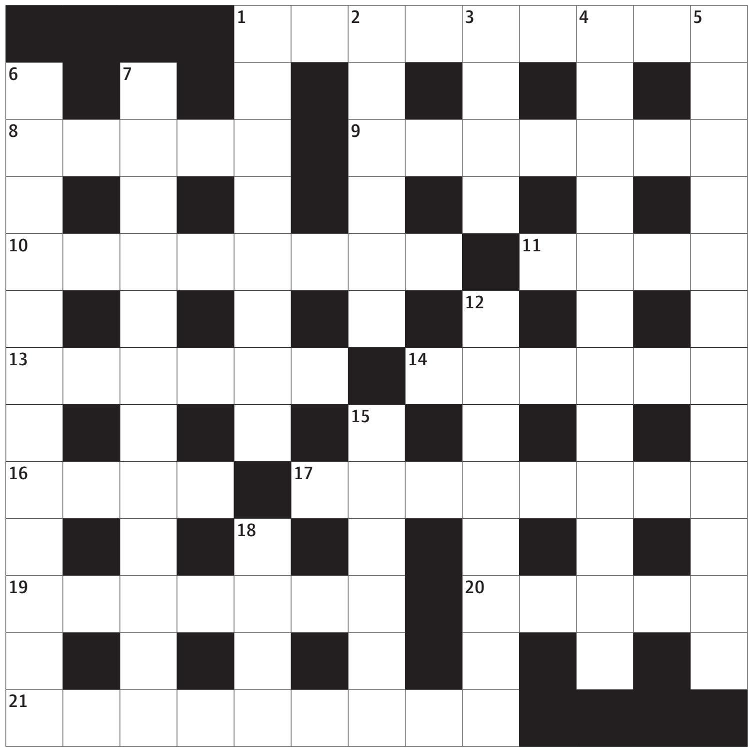


Quick crossword no 16,559

Across
1 A buzzer (9)
8 Music to be performed in a slow and dignified manner (5)
9 Therapy for treating rheumatism (or for hippos?) (7)
10 Snowstorm (8)
11 Graven image (4)
13 Gas used as fuel - ate hen (anag) (6)
14 Where Little Jack Horner sat (6)
16 Traditional story widely accepted as fact (4)
17 Swift country - ill lit up (anag) (8)
19 Weaponless (7)
20 Sauce often served with pasta (5)
21 Scheme that uses seduction to get someone to act unwisely (9)

Down
1 Getting a suntan (8)
2 Power of recall (6)
3 Outdoor swimming pool (4)
4 Written permission to fly? (8,4)
5 Excitement (12)
6 Windbag (12)
7 It carries goods, not passengers (7,5)
12 Sweet on a stick (8)
15 More considerate (6)
18 Annual small screen award (4)

Stuck? For help call 0906 200 83 83. Calls cost £1.10 per minute, plus your phone company's access charge. Service supplied by ATS. Call 0330 333 6946 for customer service (charged at standard rate).To buy puzzle books, visit guardianbookshop.com or call 0330 333 6846.



Sudoku no 6,083

Hard. Fill the grid so that each row, column and 3x3 box contains the numbers 1-9.

6	1						4	
			6	1				5
						3		
		2	9					
	7	1	3				2	
	8			4	1		3	
2	4			9	6			
		8	4	5				6
		7						4

Word wheel

Find as many words as possible using the letters in the wheel. Each must use the central letter and at least two others. Letters may be used only once. You may not use plurals, foreign words or proper nouns. There is at least one nine-letter word to be found. TARGET: Excellent-64. Good-53. Average-39.



Suguru

Fill the grid so that each square in an outlined block contains a digit. A block of two squares contains the digits 1 and 2, a block of three squares contains the digits 1, 2 and 3, and so on. No same digit appears in neighbouring squares, not even diagonally.

1			3		1
		4			
4			1		
3		5			5
	2				

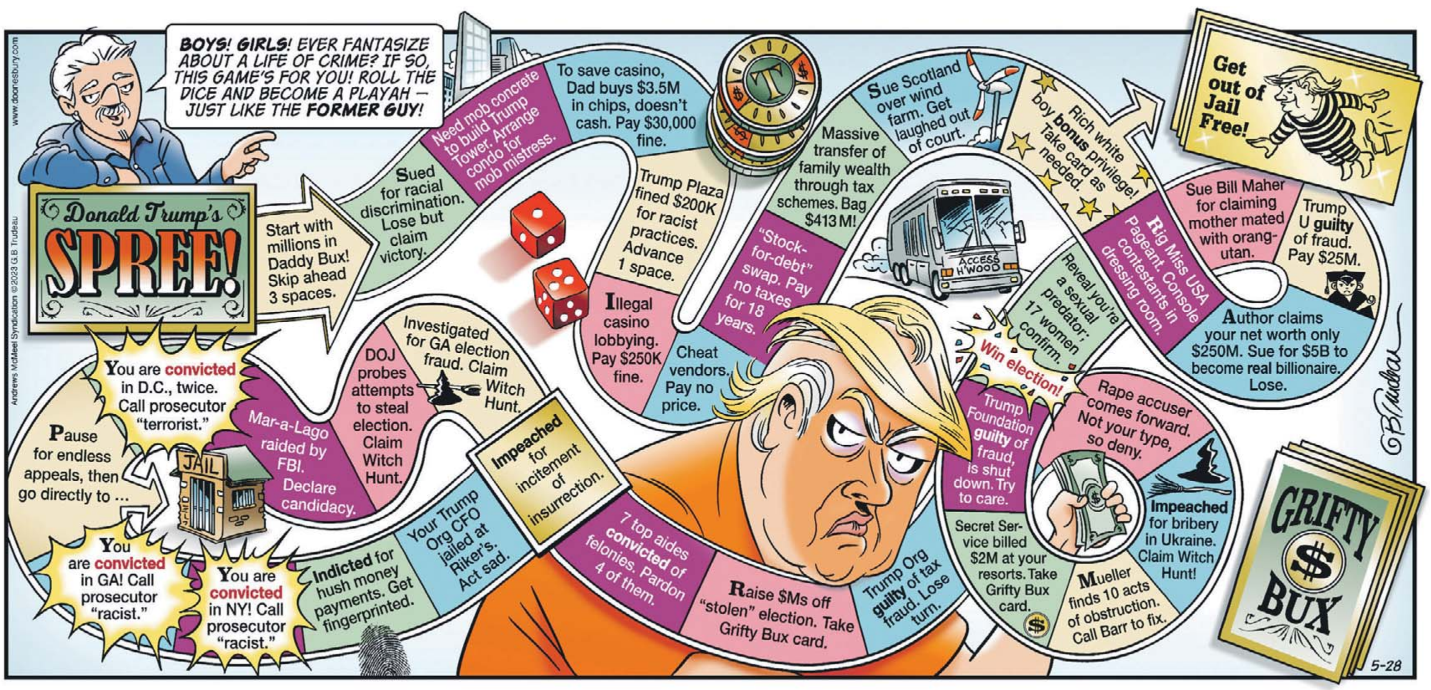
Wordsearch

Can you find 15 Caribbean foods in the grid? Words can run forwards, backwards, vertically or diagonally, but always in a straight, unbroken line.

H	S	I	F	T	L	A	S	S
C	E	V	I	C	H	E	N	T
B	J	J	P	R	T	A	L	U
R	E	I	N	E	P	S	T	N
R	R	I	L	P	L	G	I	O
C	K	F	E	N	U	A	E	C
H	A	R	U	M	T	E	U	O
O	S	V	B	N	K	M	S	C
C	A	O	A	C	G	T	R	I
H	E	L	A	U	R	I	C	E
O	P	M	A	N	G	O	E	N

Doonesbury Garry Trudeau*





TODAY'S TRIVIA CORNER ANSWER MATILDA